

April 16, 2018

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:30 pm on Monday, April 16, 2018 in the Commissioner’s Room located on the lower level of the Bladen County Courthouse.

The following members were present:

- Ray Britt, Chairman
- G. Michael Cogdell, Vice Chairman
- Charles R. Peterson
- Arthur Bullock
- Daniel Dowless
- David R. Gooden
- Russell Priest
- Ashley Trivette
- Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins

Attorney: Allen Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

ITEM 1. Chairman Britt called the meeting to order. He recognized Commissioner Peterson to address the Board. Commissioner Peterson requested a moment of silence prior to the invocation in memory of long time employee Dorothy Zeigler and Chairman Britt’s father, Clyde Britt. Reverend Larry Hayes, Good News Baptist Church of Bladenboro, provided the Invocation.

Guest 4-H’ers Kinsley and Ellie Kinlaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 2. Consent Items:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, a Public Hearing at 6:30pm on May 7, 2018 regarding a rezoning request was added to the Consent Items. The Board unanimously passed the motion.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously approved the following Consent Items:

- A. Amended Agenda, to schedule a Public Hearing.
- B. Minutes of March 27, 2018 Special Meeting.
- C. Minutes of April 3, 2018 Regular Meeting.
- D. Budget Amendments, as follows:

Central Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
106800.499.053	New Jail Expenses		131,739.00
105000.330	Utilities	170,000.00	
105000.740	Capital Outlay – Equipment	2,900.00	
Revenues			
103101.011	Taxes – CY Public Utilities	41,161.00	

To cover additional utilities associated with the Law Enforcement and Detention Center; plus additional renovations at Administrative Building.

Motor Pool

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105010.357	Vehicle Repairs	1,237.20	
Revenues			
103190.011	Insurance Claims	1,237.20	

Repairs for 2009 Ford Crown Vic, VIN #6225

Animal Control

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105200.499.028	Spay/Neuter Grant	3,198.80	
Revenues			
103260.041	Spay/Neuter Grant	3,198.80	

October – December 2017 Grant Application

Health

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105900.200	Supplies	7,215.05	
Revenues			
103560.082	Hepatitis B/Flu	7,215.05	

Budgeting funds for Hepatitis B and Flu Shots.

Education

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
106910.910	Special Appropriation	20,020.00	
Revenues			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	20,020.00	

Case 2016-1576 seize released to be paid to Bladen County Schools.

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Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.297	Special LINKS Funds	2,500.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143531.212	Special LINKS Funds	2,500.00	

100% Federal Funds on behalf of eligible Foster Teens and Young Adults up to age 21 who are or were in Foster Care.

Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.298	TRIP Funding	2,500.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143531.213	TRIP Funding	2,500.00	

100% Federal reimbursement for Insurance, Driver's License fees and/or Drivers Education classes for Foster Care teens.

Water

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
254702.610	Contract Services	1,175.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
253190.010	Misc Revenue	1,175.00	

Contractor installing water tap under four lanes of Hwy 87.

E. County Attorney Invoices.

Date	Department	Amount
3/16/18	Emergency Services	\$ 575.00
2/27/18	Sheriff's Office	\$ 1,192.00
3/26/18	Governing Board	\$ 1,225.00
4/04/18	April-18 Retainer	\$ 300.00
	Total	\$ 3,292.00

- F. Tax Releases and Refunds No. 2-18, incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.
- G. Tax Releases and Refunds No. 3-18, incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes
- H. Memorandum of License Agreement with Centerville Baptist Church.
- I. Scheduled a Public Hearing for 6:30pm on Monday, May 7, 2018 to receive comments regarding a Rezoning Request.

ITEM 3. Public Hearing:

- A. Chairman Britt declared open a Public Hearing to receive comments regarding a rezoning request regarding PIN 4615 (6.82 acres) from Residential/Agricultural to Commercial. No one in attendance addressed the Board.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Public Hearing was unanimously declared closed.

- B. Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously adopted a rezoning request regarding the following parcel:

Property Owner: Earl Sykes, Jr.
Petitioner: Earl Sykes, Jr.
Property Map No.: 0249
Block No.: 00-74
PIN: 4615 (6.82 acres)

The Board adopted the rezoning request for the above referenced property which is consistent with the adopted 2013-2030 Bladen County Land Use Plan; and the rezoning request is reasonable; and the rezoning request is in the public interest.

ITEM 4. Special Recognition:

- A. Chairman Britt recognized County Manager Greg Martin to introduce newly appointed Cooperative Extension Director Becky Spearman. Mr. Martin stated that Ms. Spearman was the former longtime Livestock Agent in Bladen County. Ms. Spearman expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve Bladen County and its citizens.

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ITEM 5. Matters of Interest to Commissioners:

No one brought an item to the Board for discussion or information.

ITEM 6. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

Chairman Britt recognized Mr. William Whitley to address the Board. Mr. Whitley introduced himself and inquired regarding GenX and what steps the County may be taking to assure safe water for citizens in District 3. Chairman Britt provided an update regarding meetings which had been held at Bladen Community College and in Gray's Creek. He also shared that management representatives from Chemours have met with the Board to provide as much information as possible. Chairman Britt stated that an investigation is ongoing between state agencies and Chemours. He shared that is not prudent for the County to get involved until the state's investigation is complete. He assured Mr. Whitley that the Board of Commissioners is not passive regarding GenX.

Commissioner Bullock shared that well testing is ongoing and Mr. Whitley may wish to make a request for additional well testing.

Commissioner Cogdell shared information with Mr. Whitley to be able to request a state agency representative attend a community or church meeting to provide additional information as well.

Commissioner Peterson reiterated that the Board of Commissioners does care about county residents, but the investigation is between Chemours and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Mr. Whitley requested additional information to be provided during a community meeting. He stated that the next meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Tuesday, April 17, 2018 and will be held at Tar Heel Middle School.

Commissioner Trivette thanked Mr. Whitley for his presence and voicing his concerns. She shared her contact information with Mr. Whitley.

Mr. Whitley thanked the Board for the opportunity to be heard, but also indicate that individuals in District 3 feel that more information needs to be shared.

Commissioner Cogdell stated that he had attended a Community meeting in the Tar Heel area some time ago.

Chairman Britt addressed the Board regarding potential school capital projects. He provided a brief overview of the challenges facing the Board of Education in making consolidation plans; which would challenge the Board of County Commissioners to fund capital projects. He stated that it would likely take approximately \$28-30 million to construct a school facility for 700 students, while charter schools could construct a \$4-4.5 million facility for the same number of students. Chairman Britt asked that the Board consider contacting all 100 counties Boards of Commissioners and Boards of Education to begin a campaign to contact legislators to assist low income rural counties to be able to provide school facilities based on charter school construction standards.

Commissioner Cogdell shared that an \$8 billion statewide referendum which is being discussed designed to provide infrastructure for schools.

Commissioner Peterson agreed with the premise but felt that the Board of Education should take the lead in this type of campaign.

ITEM 7. Finance Department: (Lisa Coleman, Finance Officer)

- A. Mrs. Coleman reviewed a Financial Dashboard for the nine-month period ending March 31, 2018.

ITEM 8. Health and Human Services Agency: (Wayne Raynor, Director)

- A. In Mr. Raynor's absence, Mrs. Djuana Register provided an overview of a Letter of Agreement with Bladen Medical Associates to provide medical equipment sterilization services. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously approved a Letter of Agreement with Bladen Medical Associates (BMA).

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ITEM 9. Revenue Department: (Renee Davis, Tax Administrator)

- A. Mrs. Davis provided an overview of a bid for county-owned property submitted by Mr. Myron Strickland of LAVH202, LLC. The property is located off of NC 242 Hwy. and was given to the County of Bladen in 1994 and is identified by Parcel ID 0005032. The bid in the amount of \$500 was received on March 19, 2018. The property is landlocked by his property and access would have to be gained through his adjoining property. The tax value of the property is \$3,600. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board voted to not accept Mr. Strickland's bid upon a vote of eight (8) AYES (Peterson, Dowless, Gooden, Bullock, Britt, Trivette, Munn-Goins, Priest) to one (1) NO (Cogdell).
- B. Mrs. Davis provided an overview of a bid received in the amount of \$8,150 submitted by Antonio and Curtis Smith, and received on April 6, 2018. The property is located at 938 Braddy Plantation Road and is identified by Parcel ID 0009227. The County of Bladen foreclosed on the property in 2016. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously accepted the \$8,150 bid to begin the upset bid process.
- C. Mrs. Davis recognized Tina Stone to join her to share information regarding North Carolina's Tag and Tax Together program. Ms. Stone serves as manager of the Motor Vehicle and Personal Property Division of the North Carolina Department of Revenue.
- Mrs. Davis and Ms. Stone provided an overview of the objectives of the program and the process by which the Tag and Tax combined notice is generated. Ms. Stone acknowledged that a requirement of each county is to designate a "default situs tax district" which is recommended to be "the highest populated area and/or highest possible tax district combination". This would allow for incorrectly entered addresses to be included in the "default situs tax district". Incorrect addresses could be entered by the dealership for new vehicle purchases or by a license plate agency. Mrs. Davis shared that communication between the county revenue office and the local plate agency in Elizabethtown is excellent. She stated that Tax Collector Carol Cain works with representatives of the local plate agency weekly to correct tax districts by creating aliases for the addresses as recorded in the DMV system.
- Mrs. Davis provided information indicating that a decrease in monthly situs errors is being realized since the Tag and Tax Program was initiated in 2013. During the fiscal year of 2013-14, there were 774 identified errors; 2014-15, 280 identified errors; 2015-16, 210 identified errors; 2016-17, 146 identified errors.
- Mrs. Davis shared that there are 2,054 roads in Bladen County. The Revenue office has created 1,850 alias addresses to assure that incorrectly entered situs addresses are placed in the correct tax district.
- Ms. Stone acknowledged that newly titled vehicles feed the default situs tax district. Once the alias address is created, when it is time for the tax renewal, the tax district should be correct. There are three different databases which are involved in the process; County of Bladen, NC Department of Motor Vehicles, and Department of Revenue. Mrs. Davis and Ms. Stone further shared that a committee is working to develop a statewide address database. The Board expressed appreciation to Ms. Stone and Mrs. Davis for the presentation and information.

ITEM 10. Soil & Water Conservation District: (Dean Morris, Director)

- A. Mr. Morris provided an overview of a stream debris removal project to be completed in the lower Black River, from Hwy. 11 to Beatty Bridge. He stated that Golden LEAF Foundation grant is funding the project. He briefly shared information regarding the bidding process. Safe Environmental Cleanup was determined to be the qualified low bidder.
- Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously approved an Agreement in the amount of \$85,959 with Safe Environmental Cleanup to provide stream debris removal services.

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Mr. Morris thanked the Board and informed them that as the other projects within the Golden LEAF project were awarded, he would be back to discuss specific agreements for the Board's consideration.

ITEM 11. Advisory Board Appointments:

- A. Elizabethtown Fire District Committee (3):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board, waiving the term limit policy, reappointed Bizzle Davis; reappointed Woody Lancaster; and appointed Dee White, to three year terms of service, with the terms expiring April 7, 2021.
- B. Health & Human Services Agency Advisory Council (3):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board, waiving term limit policy, reappointed Carl deAndrade and Terri Duncan; and appointed Rachel Mitchel to three year terms of service, with the terms expiring December 31, 2020. The motion passed upon a vote of seven (7) AYES (Peterson, Dowless, Priest, Gooden, Bullock, Britt, Trivette) to one (1) NO (Cogdell). Commissioner Munn-Goins abstained.
- C. Keep Bladen Beautiful (2):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously tabled appointments. Commissioner Peterson asked that Clerk to the Board Maria Edwards contact East Bladen and West Bladen High Schools for appointment recommendations to the committee.

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Priest to address the Board. Commissioner Priest introduced Tar Heel Mayor Roy Dew, who wished to address the Board regarding a recent unusually high water usage charge to the Town of Tar Heel. Mr. Dew thanked the Board for the opportunity to discuss his concern. Mr. Dew stated that the Town of Tar Heel generally receives a water bill for the minimum charge since the facility is used only a few times monthly. A water bill was received for water usage in January 2018 in the amount of \$179 for 61,000 gallons of water used. He stated that he contacted the Water District for assistance. Water Department Director Alan Edge visited the site and was not able to locate a water leak. Mr. Dew asked Mr. Edge to check the meter to make certain it was working properly. Mr. Edge confirmed that the water meter appeared to be metering water properly.

Following discussion, Mr. Dew asked for a follow up from the Water Department. Chairman Britt asked that Mr. Martin contact Mr. Dew following his meeting with General Services Manager Kip McClary and Water Department Director Alan Edge. Mr. Martin stated that he would be glad to follow up with Mr. Dew.

ITEM 12 County Manager: (Greg Martin)

- A. Mr. Martin reviewed Board calendars for the months of April and May 2018.

ITEM 13. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

No one in attendance addressed the Board.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:05pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board

Ray Britt, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners