

September 8, 2020

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. The meeting was held in the Superior Courtroom, located on the second level of the Bladen County Courthouse, 106 East Broad Street, Elizabethtown.

The following members were present:

- Ray Britt, Chairman
- David R. Gooden, Vice Chairman
- Charles R. Peterson
- Ashley Trivette
- Michael Cogdell
- Daniel Dowless
- Arthur Bullock

Participating Remotely: Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins

Attorney: Allen Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

ITEM 1. Reverend Bruce Miller, Hickory Grove Baptist Church, provided an invocation. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Britt stated that Commissioner Munn-Goins was participating remotely. Due to a Board member participating remotely, all votes would be recorded by roll call. He further stated that item 5B-Consideration of the Rezoning Request would need to be removed from the agenda, as the Public Comment section would remain open for twenty-four (24) hours following the close of the meeting.

ITEM 2. Consent Items:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved the following Consent Items, including the removal of item 5B-Consider Approving a Rezoning Request for Property Located at 118 Davis Road, Garland. Due to Commissioner Munn-Goins participating remotely, a roll call voice vote was taken, as required by NCGS 166A-19.24(b)(5).

- A. Agenda, with removing Item 5B.
- B. Minutes of August 17, 2020 Meeting.
- C. Budget Amendments through September 8, 2020, as follows:

Tax Administration

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
104500.192	Professional Services Legal	3,000.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103170.040	Sale of Assets	3,000.00	

Foreclosures/Attorney Invoices.

Tax Administration

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
104500.192	Professional Services Legal	200.00	
104500.192.002	Professional Services Foreclosures	36.00	
104500.270	Advertising	94.16	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	330.16	

#0050041/Darius Smith/Off Esterville Rd.

Central Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105000.740	Capital Outlay	183,450.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.050	Fund Balance Appropriation	183,450.00	

Rollover windows project for Courthouse.

Motor Pool

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105010.357	Vehicle Repairs	1,482.64	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.011	Insurance Claims	1,482.64	

VIN #4148.

Special Revenue - EMS

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
115302.200	Supplies	10,492.00	

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115302.395	Schools & Meeting	81,684.00	
115302.499.062	Staff Compensation	56,267.00	
115302.610	Contract Services	30,000.00	
115302.627	Equipment Purchases	21,200.00	
Revenues			
113280.013	EMS-SAMHSA Grant	199,643.00	

SAMHSA Grant for Rural EMS Training.

Special Revenue - CRF

Expenditures		Increase	Decrease
116800.840	CoronaVirus Relief Fund	635,066.82	
Revenues			
113190.003	CoronaVirus Relief Fund	635,066.82	

2nd payment of the CRF Plan received 07/31/2020.

Special Revenue - Health

Expenditures		Increase	Decrease
116800.840.590	CARES – Health		66,284.00
Revenues			
113180.072	CARES –Health		66,284.00

Reduction in CARES funding per Funding Authorization.

D. County Attorney Invoices.

Date	Department	Amount
8/24/2020	Water District	950.00
8/25/2020	Sheriff's Office	750.00
9/03/2020	Sept-2020 Retainer	300.00
	Total	\$ 2,000.00

- E. FY 2020-21 American Red Cross Facility Use Agreement.
- F. FY 2020-21 Scheduled Service Agreement with Brady Services.
- G. ACT Associates Scope of Work for Bladen County Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) Grant.
- H. Opt Out of Social Security Tax Deferral Option.

ITEM 3. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

No one in attendance addressed the Board.

ITEM 4. Matters of Interest:

- A. Mr. Martin introduced Human Resources Director Tyshell Jones. Ms. Jones expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with Bladen County.
- B. Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously appointed the Bladen County Democratic Party's recommendation of Robby Priest to fill a vacancy on the Bladen County Board of Commissioners until the first meeting in December. A roll call voice vote was taken. Mr. Britt stated that Mr. Robby Priest would be invited to attend the September 21, 2020 Board meeting in order to take the Oath of Office. He further stated that the family of Commissioner Russell Priest would be invited to attend as well.

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Bullock to address the Board. Commissioner Bullock provided a brief update regarding Southeastern Community and Family Services' new name, Southeastern Community Action Partnership (SCAP). He further stated that the partnership would soon have an office in Elizabethtown to better serve Bladen County's children. He expressed appreciation for the Board having extended his term on the Board of Southeastern Community Action Partnership an additional year. Commissioner Bullock serves as Chairman of the Board of SCAP.

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Cogdell to address the Board. Commissioner Cogdell asked Mr. Martin to notify NC Department of Transportation regarding signage for NC 87 at the intersection of Martin Luther King Drive. He stated the signs had been damaged and were not visible.

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Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Bullock to address the Board. Commissioner Bullock asked that Mr. Martin let the NC Department of Transportation know that a NC 87 directional sign on MLK Drive was not visible due to overgrown vegetation.

ITEM 5. Public Hearing:

A. Chairman Britt declared open the Public Hearing to receive comments regarding a rezoning request for property located at 118 Davis Road, Garland (PIN No. 1367-0007-5589). Planning Director Greg Elkins provided an overview regarding Mr. Jermaine Johnson's request in order to establish a used car lot. Mr. Elkins stated that the Planning Board had favorably recommended Mr. Johnson's rezoning request. Mr. Elkins stated that adjoining property owners had been notified via certified mail, signage placed on the property, and the Public Hearing had been advertised in the Bladen Journal.

Ms. Carlene Coble McIntyre and Ms. Emily Coble, adjacent property owners, both spoke in opposition of the rezoning request. Mr. Johnson was in attendance and introduced himself and clarified his plans for a small office space, and a very limited number of vehicles.

Following discussion, Chairman Britt declared closed the Public Hearing.

B. ~~Consider Approving a Rezoning Request for Property Located at 118 Davis Road, Garland (PIN No. 1367-0007-5589).~~ Removed from Agenda during approval of Consent items.

ITEM 6. 2020 Census Update: (Greg Elkins, Planning Director)

A. Mr. Elkins provided an overview of ongoing Census activities. He stated that enumerators are now in the county and visiting households that have not yet responded. Chairman Britt emphasized the need for all households to complete the Census, as completion will assure that Bladen County will be eligible for federal funding. He further stated that approximately \$1,850 per person, per year, for ten (10) years could be lost for each resident who does not respond.

ITEM 7. Revenue Department: (Renee Davis, Tax Administrator/Assessor)

A. Ms. Davis provided an overview of a bid received from Robbie Jones Callihan for county-owned property located at 1961 Mitchell Ford Road, Clarkton (PIN No. 0297-0098-0140). She stated that the investment to the County is \$5,500 and the bid received was in the amount of \$3,000. Following brief discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously declined the offer. A roll call voice vote was taken.

B. Ms. Davis provided an overview of a bid received from Edgar Zephyrine for county-owned property located at 219 Allen Circle, Whites Creek Township (PIN No. 1238-0060-0750). The bid was in the amount of \$2,460, and the investment to the County is currently \$2,460. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously accepted Mr. Zephyrine's bid in the amount of \$2,460 for county-owned property (PIN No. 1238-0060-0750) located at 219 Allen Circle, Whites Creek Township. A roll call voice vote was taken. By accepting the bid, the upset bid process was initiated.

A. Ms. Davis presented updated tax collections. She reported that, due to COVID-19, 2019 tax collections are challenging. Generally accepted remedies to collect past due taxes have not been utilized, resulting in reduced collection rates compared to previous years. She also provided information regarding advertisement of County-owned property, and resulting bids for the properties.

The update included justification to transition a part-time Tax Collector position to a full-time Collection Support/Audit Specialist. She stated that, if approved, the full-time position would be advertised in-house. She expressed

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appreciation and asked Board members to contact her should there be questions regarding her request which will be presented for consideration during the September 21, 2020 meeting.

ITEM 8. Emergency Services: (Nathan Dowless, Director)

- A. Mr. Dowless provided an overview of a Bladen County Mass Feeding Policy. He stated that this policy was designated as a special project for Area Five (5) of which Bladen County is a part. Commissioner Peterson suggested incorporating additional sites on each side of the Cape Fear River, in order to assure that residents would be able to reach a feeding site in the case of river flooding, as well as sites to be identified in White Oak, Live Oak, and Ammon.
- B. Mr. Dowless provided a brief overview of a 2020 Bladen County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). He stated that Bladen County was in a “crosswalk” year, which indicated a number of policy reviews and possible revisions and updates. Mr. Dowless expressed appreciation to all of the agencies involved in the EOP.
Following additional discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously approved the Bladen County Mass Feeding Policy, with suggested revisions, and the 2020 Bladen County Emergency Operations Plan. A roll call voice vote was taken.
- C. Mr. Dowless provided a comprehensive overview of Bladen County’s Emergency Management program. He discussed relationships with other agencies within Bladen County local government, as well as relationships developed throughout the region and state, providing a framework to mitigate natural disasters. Following discussion, Mr. Dowless expressed appreciation.

ITEM 9. Health and Human Services Agency: (Dr. Terri Duncan, Director)

- A. Dr. Duncan provided an update regarding COVID-19.
- B. Dr. Duncan provided an overview of a request for three (3) part-time positions to provide COVID-19 clinical support and nursing support. She stated that the positions would be funded by state-allocated funds (543 ELC Enhancing Detection Activities Agreement Addendum). The three part-time positions would provide COVID-19 support only which will allow full-time positions to concentrate on normal duties.
Following brief discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved three part-time positions to provide clinical and nursing support functions. A roll call voice vote was taken.

ITEM 10. General Services: (Kip McClary, Director)

- A. Mr. McClary provided an update regarding the courthouse window replacement project. A. G. Barefoot, LLC. He also presented Change Order #1 in the amount of \$6,557 to include an additional eleven (11) windows identified for removal and replacement. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved Change Order #1 in the amount of \$6,557 submitted by A. G. Barefoot, LLC regarding the courthouse window replacement project. A roll call voice vote was taken.

ITEM 11. Bladen County Water District:

- A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously exited regular session and entered session as Bladen County Water District Board of Directors. A roll call vote was taken.
- B. Mr. McClary provided an update regarding the ongoing Phase IV water system expansion project.

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- C. Mr. McClary provided an overview of an agreement in the amount of \$106,129 with Bill Worley and Sons General Contractors, Inc. which will allow for the construction of a 2,400 square foot building on Bladen County Water District property. Mr. McClary stated that the building will be used to house water system supplies, including, but not limited to, meters, pipe, and fittings. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously approved the agreement in the amount of \$106,129 with Bill Worley and Sons General Contractors, Inc. A roll call vote was taken.
- D. Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously exited session as Bladen County Water District Board of Directors. A roll call vote was taken.

ITEM 12. Advisory Board Appointments:

- A. **Tobermory Fire Department Firefighters Relief Fund Advisory Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously appointed Kenneth Cain to an unexpired term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022. A roll call vote was taken.

ITEM 13. Advisory Board Appointments for Consideration at the September 21, 2020 Meeting:

- A. Keep Bladen Beautiful (6)
- B. Voluntary Agricultural Districts Committee (1)

ITEM 15. County Manager: (Greg Martin)

- A. Mr. Martin reviewed calendars for the months of September 2020 and October 2020.
- B. Mr. Martin provided a brief overview of a courthouse lawn use request submitted by Reverend David Pait. Reverend Pait requested the use of the lawn for each Tuesday in October (October 6, 13, 20, 27) to hold a 7pm prayer service. Following brief discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved the courthouse lawn use request submitted by Reverend David Pait. A roll call vote was taken.
- C. Mr. Martin provided an overview of a Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) program application. He stated that the proposed use of the grant funds is to assist citizens who are experiencing difficulties with paying rent and utilities. He stated that each award would be no more than \$900,000. Following additional discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously approved a Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) program application. A roll call vote was taken.
- D. Mr. Martin reviewed for information a listing of FY 2020-21 Charitable Contribution applications received. He stated that the Board would be asked to consider approving funding levels at a future meeting.

Mr. Martin reminded the Board of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Legislative Goals process. He stated that this matter will be included on the September 21, 2020 meeting agenda.

15. Closed Session:

- A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously entered Closed Session in Accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4) Economic Development at 8:30pm. A roll call vote was taken.

Commissioner Munn-Goins was excused from the Closed Session.

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B. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously exited Closed Session at 8:55pm.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously authorized Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-Industrial, Inc. to submit a joint application with the Town of Bladenboro for a U. S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to assist in funding a Downtown Bladenboro Revitalization project. No dollar amount was specified.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously adjourned at 8:56pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board

Ray Britt, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners