

January 30, 2017

A special meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 5:30 pm on Monday, January 30, 2017 in the Powell-Melvin Agricultural Center Auditorium, 450 Smith Circle, Elizabethtown, NC.

The following members were present:

Charles R. Peterson, Chairman

Ray Britt, Vice Chairman

Russell Priest

Arthur Bullock

Daniel Dowless

G. Michael Cogdell

Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins

Ashley S. Trivette

David R. Gooden

ITEM 1. Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

A. Chairman Peterson provided an invocation.

B. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 2. Economic Development: (Chuck Heustess, Director):

A. Chairman Peterson recognized Mr. Heustess to address the Board. Mr. Heustess introduced NC's Southeast President Steve Yost. Mr. Yost expressed appreciation to the Board for its support of Economic Development County and for the opportunity to address the Board. NC's Southeast not only markets Bladen County to potential employers globally, but also in the region which covers Montgomery, Anson, Richmond, Scotland, Hoke, Robeson, Cumberland, Sampson, Wayne, Duplin, Onslow, Pender, New Hanover, Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen Counties. Mr. Yost encouraged the Board to continue its influence on economic development policy at the state level. Mr. Yost and Bladen County Economic Developer Chuck Heustess further discussed attributes which the County of Bladen has to offer to potential industry. They also discussed challenges that Bladen County faces in terms of competitiveness.

Board members queried Mr. Yost and Mr. Heustess regarding Economic Development activities.

Steve Yost expressed his appreciation to the Board for having been invited to participate during the meeting. The Board also expressed appreciation to Mr. Yost.

ITEM 3. Break:

The Board recessed at 6:32pm for refreshments.

The Board reconvened at 6:45pm.

ITEM 2. Economic Development:

B. A SWOT Analysis regarding Economic Development was reviewed and discussed. The process was introduced during a Special Meeting held on January 9, 2017.

ITEM 4. Review Other Categories:

A. Chairman Peterson reviewed other Issues identified in the SWOT Analysis not necessarily attached to Economic Development.

ITEM 5. Consider Scheduling Next Meetings as Needed:

A. Education

B. Law Enforcement

C. Mental Health

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D. Health

The Board briefly discussed representatives to contact to discuss other topics. The Sheriff, Bladen County Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor and BCC President Dr. William Findt, Dr. Roxie Wells, David Howard and Eastpointe were discussed to be invited to address specific topics.

ITEM 6. Other Matters:

The Animal Control Advisory Board submitted a request through the County Manager's office for consideration to hold a fundraiser in June 2017 for the Bladen County Animal Shelter non-profit trust fund, to help raise funds to better meet the needs of the animals. The intended use of funds raised is to assist with funding a new dog walking area and other needs of the Shelter. The event would be no-cost to the County. Chairman Peterson took a quick poll of the Board. No one expressed opposition to the request.

Chairman Peterson reminded everyone of the NC's Southeast Annual Dinner and Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 31, 2017. It is scheduled to be held at the Cape Fear Winery and Vineyard.

Chairman Peterson discussed a need for a follow-up Planning Session. Following discussion, the Board scheduled a Special Meeting for 5:30 pm on Monday, February 13, 2017.

Mr. Martin requested that an update regarding a proposed Water District expansion be added to the next Planning Session as well.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board

Charles R. Peterson, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners