

December 16, 2019

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:30 pm on Monday, December 16, 2019. The meeting was held in the Commissioners’ Room, located on the lower 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
- Michael Cogdell
- Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins
- Daniel Dowless
- Russell Priest
- Ashley Trivette
- Arthur Bullock

Attorney: Allen Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

ITEM 1. Reverend Warren Hill, Bethel Baptist Church, provided an invocation. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 2. Consent Items:

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

- A. Agenda.
- B. Minutes of the December 2, 2019 Regular Meeting.
- C. Budget Amendments, as follows:

Tax Administration

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
104500.192	Professional Services Legal	2,000.00	
104500.192.002	Professional Services Foreclosures	6,800.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103170.040	Sale of Assets	8,800.00	

Foreclosures/Attorney invoices.

Tax Administration

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
104500.192	Professional Services Legal	185.00	
104500.270	Advertising	117.56	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	302.56	

#0015482 Noble Street – Jeffrey & Qiana Pridgen.

Sheriff

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105100.200	Supplies	1,675.72	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103270.009	Donations	1,675.72	

Processing incoming donation for supplies.

Sheriff

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
105100.200.016	Supplies – Surplus	3,100.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103270.018	SH Helo	3,100.00	

Sale of helicopter parts.

Library

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
106700.200	Supplies	40.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	40.00	

Donation in memory of Bobby Kemp from Town of Hope Mills.

Kelly Dike Grant

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
115308.610	Contract Services	275,000.00	
115308.960.001	Admin	25,000.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
113230.052	Kelly Dike 23014-2317-7103	300,000.00	

Grant for planning and engineering of Kelly Dike.

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Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.6160.510	Foster Care Donations	100.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143190.027	Foster Care Donations	100.00	

To purchase items for Foster Care Unit.

Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.6160.510	Foster Care Donations	200.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143190.027	Foster Care Donations	200.00	

To purchase items for Foster Care Unit.

Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.6160.555	Refund Client Re-Pay	750.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143591.010	Client Ref/Medicaid	750.00	

Credit clients payments received in September and October per State.

Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
146100.6160.571	Caring for Kids	750.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143531.344	Caring for Kids	750.00	

To purchase items for Foster Care Children.

Water Phase IV

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
234700.611.043	Contract Services – LKC Engineering	37,800.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
233190.050	Fund Balance Appropriation	37,800.00	

Change Orders for Phase IV project.

D. County Attorney Invoices.

Date	Department	Amount
11/22/2019	Administration	400.00
11/25/2019	Division on Aging/BARTS	1,250.00
11/26/2019	Health & Human Services Agency	525.00
12/02/2019	December 2019 Retainer	300.00
	Total	\$ 2,475.00

- E. Tax Releases No. 11-19, incorporated by reference and made a part of these Minutes.
- F. Rules of Procedure for the Bladen County Board of Commissioners.
- G. Bladen County Board of Commissioners’ Code of Ethics.
- H. FY 2021 NC Department of Transportation Delegation of Authority for the Benefit of Bladen Area Rural Transportation System (BARTS).
- I. 2020 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) for the Benefit of Bladen Area Rural Transportation System (BARTS).

ITEM 3. Special Recognition:

- A. Chairman Britt, along with each Board member, recognized Charles Peterson and expressed appreciation for his leadership as Chairman from December 2018 until December 2019. Commissioner Peterson expressed gratitude.

ITEM 4. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

- A. Chairman Britt recognized Mr. Brian Bednar with Birdseye Renewable Energy to address the Board concerning a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) submitted to the NC Utilities Commission. He provided an overview of the application submission which will allow for 63 miles of Duke Energy transmission lines to be upgraded. This project, if approved by the NC Utility Commission, will support additional solar development in southeastern NC.

The Friesian project will be located in the Laurinburg area and will be the first project to be completed following a successful application to the Utilities Commission. He stated that a proposed Slender Branch Solar project to be located in Bladen County near the Columbus County line, would be the second project to be able to connect to the upgraded transmission lines and its generated power could be sold.

Following discussion regarding renewable energy, which Duke Energy and the State of North Carolina have both identified as a priority, and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously approved a Letter of Support to be submitted to the NC Utilities Commission on behalf of the Friesian Holdings, LLC Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity application submittal.

ITEM 5. Matters of Interest to Commissioners:

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Bullock to address the Board. Commissioner Bullock addressed the financial importance of a correct and complete count of Bladen County citizens during the upcoming 2020 Census. He inquired regarding other ways of sharing information with citizens who do not have internet service. He also shared that citizens who receive mail at a PO Box instead of a physical address may not receive notifications regarding the Census. Following discussion, Mr. Martin stated that a 2020 Census presentation will be included on an upcoming Board agenda.

ITEM 6. Bladen County Water District:

- A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously entered Session as the Bladen County Water District Board of Directors.
- B. LKC Engineering representatives Adam Kiker and Logan Parsons provided an update regarding the Phase IV water system expansion project. The overall expansion project includes:
- 27.5 miles of new water lines
 - New well and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System
 - System-wide radio-read water meter replacement

They reminded the Board that funding has been secured through a \$4,997,000 USDA loan and a \$1,000,000 grant.

Commissioner Peterson and Chairman Britt inquired regarding installation of hydrants along the new water lines. Mr. Kiker indicated that specifications allowed for 2 hydrants per mile of water line and one at every intersection, but adjacent homes and businesses would be considered. Chairman Britt inquired regarding cost of hydrants in order to include additional hydrants. Mr. Kiker indicated that USDA would designate how many \$5,000 hydrants could be included in the funding.

- C. Following the update provided by LKC Engineering representatives and upon motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously adopted the following Resolution of Approval for Phase IV Water System Expansion Final Plans and Specifications:



- D. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell, the Board unanimously approved Amendment #2 to LKC Engineering Services Agreement to include the establishment of a well site along Twisted Hickory Road, and a modification in the scope of services and payment to include the installation cost of the new test well along Guyton Road, reflecting a \$22,055 net increase.
- E. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously exited Session as Bladen County Water District Board of Commissioners.

ITEM 7. Department of Social Services: (Vickie Smith, Director)

- A. Mrs. Smith and Program Manager Lisa Nance reviewed charts regarding Adult Medicaid Audit Results for November 2019. The Board expressed appreciation for the information and continuing enhanced training efforts.

ITEM 8. Health and Human Services Agency: (Dr. Terri Duncan, Director)

- A. Dr. Duncan provided a brief overview of an Agreement of Association with Duquesne University to allow required clinical rotations for nursing students. Following brief discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously approved an Agreement of Association with Duquesne University.

Following a request by Commissioner Peterson to address items 8B through 8F with one motion, the Board, by consensus, agreed to consider all of the Memoranda of Understanding. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously approved the following:

- B. Memorandum of Understanding with Bladen County Department of Social Services.
C. Memorandum of Understanding with Cape Fear Valley Women's Health Specialists.
D. Memorandum of Understanding with Cape Fear Valley-Bladen Medical Associates.
E. Memorandum of Understanding with Columbus County Health Department.
F. Memorandum of Understanding with Eastpointe MCO.

ITEM 9. Soil and Water Conservation District: (Dean Morris, Director)

- A. Mr. Morris provided an overview of Amendment 02-2020 to the Stream Debris Removal Contract 17-175-4003. He stated that since many of the stream debris removal projects had been completed under budget, the amendment was allowing for a twelve-month extension (through December 31, 2020) in order to complete additional debris removal projects. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously approved Amendment 02-2020 to the Stream Debris Removal Contract 17-175-4003.
- B. Mr. Morris provided an update regarding beaver management activities. He stated that as of November 1, 2109, Bladen County is now sharing a full-time APHIS employee with Robeson County. He shared information to contact the Soil and Water Conservation District office or Cooperative Extension should services be requested. He further stated that the Beaver Management Program Advisory Committee will meet in January or February 2020 to review program activities.
- C. Mr. Morris introduced a newly formed Waccamaw River Watershed Management Study Group. He stated that this group has been founded to work across county and state lines to insure that the Lumber and Waccamaw Rivers have unimpeded flow in order to mitigate flooding as was recently experienced following Hurricane Florence. He indicated that creeks and swamps in southeastern NC flow into the Lumber and Waccamaw Rivers. He further stated that potential flooding in Bladenboro, Lumberton, and Clarkton could be reduced by successfully completing a large-scale stream debris removal project, as well as reviewing bridge culvert infrastructure challenges. He stated that South Carolina has pledged significant funding to assist with an engineering design study. Cape Fear Resource Conservation & Development has been asked to manage funding of the potential project. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board unanimously recommended Commissioner Peterson to serve on the Waccamaw River Watershed

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Management Study Group. Commissioner Peterson accepted the appointment.

ITEM 10. Finance Department: (Lisa Coleman, Finance Officer)

- A. Mrs. Coleman reviewed a Financial Dashboard for the five-month period ending November 30, 2019. She highlighted that sales tax has increased approximately 9% for the current year over the same time last year. She also stated that Emergency Medical Systems (EMS) revenues have trended upward. Solid Waste has realized a reduction in tonnage, but collection and hauling expenses have not reflected a reduction. Monthly monitoring is ongoing.
- B. Mrs. Coleman stated that the audit for FY 2018-19 has been completed and is now being reviewed. She stated that an Amendment to the Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Company (TPSA) Contract to Audit Accounts for the period ending June 30, 2019 will allow for a revised due date and \$5,000 modification fee. She stated that the modification fee was incurred due to state required additional Medicaid compliance testing.
Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved an Amendment to the TPSA Contract to Audit Accounts for the period ending June 30, 2019.
- C. Mrs. Coleman provided an overview regarding the bid process for audit services. She stated that on November 5, 2019, Requests for Proposal were submitted to eleven CPA firms. She stated that ten of the firms have been identified as the most active local government audit service providers on the Local Government Commission's website.
Mrs. Coleman stated that the low bid was received from Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Company at a five-year cost of \$226,500. Other responses were received as follows:
- Mauldin and Jenkins CPAs \$ 257,000
 - Martin, Starnes & Associates \$ 340,800
- Mrs. Coleman stated that two firms declined to bid, and there were no submittals from six firms contacted.

Chairman Britt briefly recessed the meeting at 7:54pm.

Chairman Britt reconvened the meeting at 8:03pm.

Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously accepted the bid in the amount of \$226,500 submitted by Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams and Company, PA to provide audit services for FY 2019-20 through FY 2023-24.

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Munn-Goins to address the Board and Mrs. Coleman. Commissioner Munn-Goins inquired regarding income generated by the housing of federal inmates. Mrs. Coleman stated that as of her last notification, that there were 33 federal inmates housed, which has generated approximately \$21,000 in revenue since December 5, 2019.

ITEM 11. Revenue Department: (Renee Davis, Tax Administrator/Assessor)

- A. In Ms. Davis' absence, Mr. Martin provided an overview of a bid in the amount of \$7,400 submitted by Jerry J. Jessup, Jr., for county-owned property (PIN No. 0395-0007-4813) located at 158 Fletcher Johnson Road, White Oak. Mr. Martin stated that the investment to the County was \$7,400 on the 1.0 acre tract of land.
Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board unanimously accepted the \$7,400 bid for County-owned property (PIN NO. 0395-0007-4813) located at 158 Fletcher Johnson Road. By accepting the bid submitted by Mr. Jessup, the upset bid process was initiated.
- B. Mr. Martin provided an overview of a bid submitted by Michael G. Vause and Virginia J. Vause in the amount of \$4,560 for County-owned property (PIN

No. 1239-0059-1896) located off Airport Road, Elizabethtown. He stated that the investment to the County was \$4,560 on the 3.0 acre property.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously accepted the \$4,560 bid submitted by Michael G. Vause and Virginia J. Vause for County-owned property (PIN No. 1239-0059-1896) located off Airport Road. By accepting the bid, the upset bid process was initiated.

- C. Mr. Martin provided an overview of a bid submitted in the amount of \$4,730 by former owner Joyce Freeman for County-owned property (PIN No. 1248-0037-4022) located on McKoy Road, Whites Creek. He stated that the investment to the county is \$4,730 on the .47 acre property. Ms. Freeman, as a previous owner, also requested a private sale

Following brief discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously accepted the bid in the amount of \$4,730 for county-owned property (PIN No. 1248-0037-4022) located on McKoy Road, Whites Creek and also approved the private sale request.

ITEM 12. Emergency Services: (Nathan Dowless, Director)

- A. Mr. Dowless provided an overview of a Facility Use Agreement with Bladen Disaster Recovery Team for the County-Owned facility located at 108 South Cypress Street, Elizabethtown (former Paul H. Sessoms Building). He stated that the County would still have designated areas for storage and other use. However, the location was an important staging area in overall recovery efforts following Hurricane Florence.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously approved a Facility Use Agreement with Bladen Disaster Recovery Team for the property located at 108 South Cypress Street, Elizabethtown.

- B. Mr. Dowless briefly reviewed a re-bid process for demolition services for property located at 16649 NC 210 Hwy., Ivanhoe. This property has recently been acquired through a Hurricane Matthew Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Mr. Dowless stated that of the four bids received, that D. G. Jackson provided the low bid in the amount of \$11,500.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Munn-Goins, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously accepted the \$11,500 bid submitted by D. G. Jackson to provide demolition services for property located at 16649 NC 210 Hwy., Ivanhoe.

ITEM 13. Advisory Board Appointments:

- A. Ammon Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Abby Wilson to a three-year term, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.

- B. BARTS Advisory Board (6):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously reappointed Kelly Robeson and Kenneth Brown to three-year terms, with terms expiring December 31, 2022; and, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Arthur Bullock, Allen Singletary, David Howell, and Judy Bowen to three-year terms of service, with terms expiring December 31, 2022.

- C. Bay Tree Lakes Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Albert Beatty to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.

- D. Division on Aging Advisory Committee (2):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Munn-Goins, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously reappointed Meredith Snowden and Rachel Mitchell to three-year terms of service, with terms expiring December 31, 2022.

- E. East Arcadia Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Munn-Goins, seconded by Commissioner Bullock,

the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Calene C. Brown to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.

- F. Economic Development Commission (3):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously tabled appointments.
- G. Emergency Medical Service Advisory Council (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the Board unanimously appointed Stephen Fife to an unexpired term, with the term expiring October 31, 2020.
- H. Health and Human Services Agency Advisory Board (4):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Munn-Goins, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Rebecca Hester, Tommy Thompson, Charles R. Peterson, and Dr. Mollie Glenn to three-year terms of service, with terms expiring December 31, 2022.
- I. Hickory Grove Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Gary McMillan to a three-year term, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.
- J. Kelly Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed Jerry Potter to a three-year term, with the term expiring December 31, 2022,
- K. Library Board (3):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board unanimously reappointed Sheila Nance and Judy Elkins to three-year terms of service, with terms expiring December 31, 2022.
- L. Lisbon Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, unanimously reappointed George Barber to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.
- M. Recreation Committee (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell, the Board unanimously appointed Nicole S. Kinlaw to an unexpired term, with the term expiring June 30, 2021.
- N. Tar Heel Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Bullock, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, reappointed Terry Herring to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.
- O. Tobermory Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, reappointed Johnathan M. Register to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.
- P. White Oak Fire Department Firefighter's Relief Fund Board (1):** Upon a motion by Commissioner Bullock, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the Board, waiving the rules on term limits, reappointed David Price to a three-year term of service, with the term expiring December 31, 2022.

ITEM 14. Advisory Board Appointments for Consideration During January 21, 2020 Meeting:

- A. Airport Appeals Board (2)
- B. Elizabethtown Planning and Zoning Commission & Board of Adjustments (ETJ) (2)

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ITEM 15. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

Chairman Britt recognized Mr. Joe Cain to address the Board. Mr. Cain introduced himself as a resident of the Tobermory area. He stated that he wanted to make the Board aware of a railroad crossing on Chicken Foot Road that did not have lights and safety arms to block the crossing. He expressed concern and requested assistance to have proper safety equipment and measures in place.

Mr. Cain also inquired regarding mental health facilities in Bladen County, specifically at the Cape Fear Valley-Bladen County Hospital. Board members encouraged Mr. Cain to reach out to Cape Fear Valley Healthcare in Fayetteville. He expressed concern regarding the loss of mental health providers and facilities in the area. Mr. Cain shared his contact information with Mr. Martin in order for follow-up information to be shared with Mr. Cain.

ITEM 16. Matters of Interest to Commissioners:

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Peterson to address the Board. Commissioner Peterson asked that the Board be provided an update regarding buyouts of properties through Hazard Mitigation programs. Mr. Martin stated that information would be shared with the Board how buyouts would affect property tax.

Chairman Britt recognized Commissioner Cogdell to address the Board. Commissioner Cogdell stated that he would like to approach Eastpointe CEO Sarah Stroud to inquire regarding funding to assist homeless in Bladen County.

Chairman Britt addressed the Board regarding support of Chemours and its mitigation efforts by funding a multi-million dollar plant to significantly reduce GenX emissions. He also shared his concerns regarding ongoing efforts to maintain a clean and clear White Lake as well.

Commissioner Cogdell encouraged Board members to attend an upcoming educational session regarding GenX and Chemours. He stated that the next session will be scheduled in January 2020. Chairman Britt encouraged all Board members to attend GenX update meetings held by state agencies as well.

ITEM 17. County Manager: (Greg Martin)

- A. Mr. Martin reviewed Board calendars for the months of December 2019 and January 2020.
- B. Mr. Martin provided an update regarding a Golden LEAF Foundation Communities-Based Grant application regarding a driving pad project to be constructed adjacent to the Bladen County Emergency Services Training Center, located on US 701 Hwy., north of Elizabethtown. Mr. Martin stated that the County had submitted a Letter of Interest (LOI). Golden LEAF Foundation representatives have now invited the County to submit a full application which will be due in February 2020.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board

Ray Britt, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners