

September 3, 2013

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, September 3, 2013 at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Johnson, Manning, McCray, Phelps and Sexton were present. Also present were County Manager Jerry W. Rhodes, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Finance Officer Frank Milazi and Interim County Attorney Wendel Hutchins.

Chair Manning called for a motion to adjourn the August 5, 2013 Board of Commissioners meeting. **Commissioner Sexton made a motion to adjourn the August 5, 2013 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Manning called the meeting to order. Commissioner Sexton gave the invocation; Cooperative Extension Director Rebecca Liverman led the pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Chair Manning added Personnel NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6) to the Closed Session. **Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the addition of NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6) (personnel) to the Closed Session. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA: **Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the change of removing Harvey West, Jr. from the list of Southern Albemarle Association delegates and changing Jean Alexander's title from Commissioner to Mrs.:**

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|----|--|-----------------|
| a) | Washington County 2012 Community Development Program Manual                                |                 |
| b) | Washington County Language Access Plan   |                 |
| c) | Southern Albemarle Association Delegates for Washington County for the 2013 Annual Meeting |                 |
| d) | NC Education Lottery Public School Building Capital Fund—                                  |                 |
| e) | Gym Floor Renovations—Creswell High School--   | \$ 9,980        |
| f) | Replace AC Unit—Plymouth High School--   | <u>\$ 6,437</u> |
|    | Total Cost   | \$16,417        |

**Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Manning presented a certificate to Elaine Vann, Register of Deeds, on her accomplishment of being awarded the Shining Star award from her Association. Chair Manning also presented Chip Main, Tax Administrator with a certification of appreciation for his years of service to the County.

PUBLIC FORUM: None.

AGRICULTURE UPDATE: Lance Grimes, Washington County Agriculture Agent spoke the Board and gave the following presentation. He stated that he visits the Commissioners Meetings two times a year to give an update on County agriculture. He mentioned that the

statistics come from NCDA statistics book. Mr. Grimes stated that this year has been one of the best corn crops in a while. Tobacco was hurt by all the water we had earlier in the year.

Mr. Grimes also noted that Washington, Tyrrell, Hyde and Beaufort counties make up the Blacklands, and they do a tour each year in a different county. Next year it will be in Washington County.

## Washington County Agriculture



## Agriculture Diversity

- Soil Types
- Crop Diversity



## Statistics

- Total Acres in County: 222,843
- Number of Farms: 187
- Total Land in Farms: 96,911 acres



## Agriculture Statistics

Year	Total Cash Receipts	Rank in the State
2009	\$86,800,000	39
2010	\$82,436,997	36
2011	\$70,363,228	43

3 year average: \$79,866,741



## 2013 Crop Acreage

Crop	Acreage
Corn	30,100
Wheat	21,028
Soybeans	31,700
Cotton	10,472
Peanuts	684
Rapeseed	1,528
Tobacco	370



## 2013 Crop Update

- Wheat
- Corn
- Soybeans
- Cotton
- Tobacco
- Peanuts
- Potatoes
- Vegetables (watermelons, snap beans, sweet corn, etc.)

# County Agriculture Importance

- Land Rent
- Employers
- Seed, Chemical, Fertilizer Companies
- Custom Sprayers, harvesters, etc.



## 2013 BFMA Tour





## Peanut Pod Blasting



# Contact Information

Lance Grimes

Washington County Agriculture Extension Agent

128 E Water St Plymouth, NC 27962

Office: 793-2163

Mobile: 217-8417



Mr. Grimes mentioned that on September 16 at Albemarle Beach from 9 – 11:30 am he will be doing ‘pod blasting’ on samples of peanuts. He takes a pressure washer to them and then spreads them out on a chart to see the optimum time to dig.

Commissioner Phelps asked about the feasibility of small vegetables and a farmers market in this area. Ms. Liverman, Cooperative Extension Director told the Board that years ago the County had a gentlemen’s agreement with the owner of a piece of land for \$1 for having a farmer’s market on it. In recent years, the land was sold and the new owners wanted to use their land. Crops that are grown in Washington County are shipped away from here. Farmers have to sell over 51% of what they grow for it to be considered a farmer’s market. Most of our farmers have contracts to sell their crops.

Commissioner McCray asked why small farmers are getting out of peanuts. Mr. Grimes stated it’s a rollercoaster regarding the price they will be paid from year to year and the liability of hauling trailers up and down the highway make it difficult for the small farmers to make a profit.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION—UNDERPINNING REQUIREMENT:  
Ms. Keyes spoke to the Board about the August 15, 2013 Planning Board meeting. (Ms. Keyes also noted that Planning Board member David Clifton was in attendance tonight.) Ms. Keyes read the amendment being brought forth by the Planning Board from their meeting:

## AMENDMENT

### REQUIRING ALL MANUFACTURED HOMES TO HAVE A FORM OF UNDERPINNING

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners fully supports the requirement that manufactured homes have a form of underpinning (with a minimum of concrete form board or #29 gauge metal) before electrical service is granted.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if the underpinning is destroyed under the manufactured home, it must be replaced within 60 days unless a variance for an extension has been requested and granted by the Washington County Planning Board.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be recorded in the Washington County Register of Deeds Office and a copy provided to the County Building Inspector for immediate adoption and enforcement as included in the attachment.

(Approved by the Washington County Board of Commissioners this the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013.)

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Julie J. Bennett, CMC, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion to accept the Planning Board's recommendation to amend the ordinance regarding the underpinning requirement for mobile homes. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

**Commissioner Johnson made a motion to have public hearing to amend the ordinance regarding the underpinning requirement for mobile homes on Monday, October 7, 2013. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

PROPOSED EMS FRANCHISE ORDINANCE: Mr. Rhodes spoke to the Board and stated that Tyrrell County doesn't have an EMS franchise ordinance in place. Since Washington and Tyrrell Counties work closely together, Tyrrell County would like their franchise ordinance to mirror Washington County's. The version being presented is similar to the one Washington County already has in place. The difference is in the wording regarding the two counties creating a Washington County/Tyrrell County Ambulance Board and the members being approved by their respective commissioners: Commissioner Representatives from the two counties (two from each county). The other issue to consider is charging for the granting of a franchise. Washington County's current ordinance does not address that. Mr. Rhodes and Mr.

Hutchins have had conversations about this and also with David Gadd, Tyrrell County's attorney. Mr. Rhodes would like to meet with Tyrrell County again and then bring this issue back to the Board.

A few questions were asked:

Is there an expiration date on the existing franchise ordinance?

Will there be specific regulations on what could be done?

How many transport franchises will be needed?

Chair Manning and Commissioner Phelps would like a licensing fee added. Commissioner Phelps also stated that page 5-D repeats itself.

Commissioner Sexton asked where we go from here. Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Hutchins and Mr. Gadd and Tyrrell County's new County Manager will meet and discuss this further.

Commissioner Sexton also asked what an Ambulance Board would be needed for. Commissioner Sexton would rather see a County Manager/Commissioner from each county as a board.

Mr. Rhodes is to do some more work on this issue and bring it back to the board.

#### PROPOSED WASHINGTON COUNTY RECREATION COMMISSION OR AUTHORITY ORDINANCE:

Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Phelps have worked on an ordinance for creating a Recreation Board. They prefer it be called a Board not an Advisory Board. They looked at previous ordinances from Washington County and across the state.

Mr. Milazi presented some budgetary figures from Recreation for last year. Commissioner Phelps asked why kids have to pay insurance even if they have insurance. Commissioner Johnson reminded Commissioner Phelps that when Ms. Young (former County Attorney) was here she checked into this and said that this is Group insurance that's being paid for under Recreation. Commissioner Phelps would like more info on the recreational insurance. Mr. Fulford said it is used for when a child gets hurt and the parent isn't there to sign for their care. Mr. Fulford or his staff can make sure the child gets treatment because of this recreational insurance.

**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to have public hearing on the ordinance for creation of the proposed Washington County Recreation Board on October 21, 2013. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

NC-32 CONNECTOR: Nikki Cobb, NCDOT spoke to the Board and stated that NCDOT is requesting a Right of Way from Washington County for the NC-32 Connector project. Ms. Cobb told the Board that .363 acres is needed from Washington County. NCDOT will pay Washington County \$2,068 for this.363 acres. Discussion ensued.

The Commissioners decided to make a counteroffer to NCDOT in 30 days and will be ready to make a decision at the October 7, 2013 Board meeting. Commissioner Johnson asked

Mr. Main to see if he can find any justification for asking DOT for additional money for the .363 acres.

AUCTION OF FORMER STOTESBERRY MOBILE HOME: Mr. Rhodes reminded the Board that the County purchased a mobile home along with the land from the Stotesberry's. He is seeking direction with the sale of the mobile home. The County plans to use the hangar and 3 car garage for storage area. Mr. Rhodes stated that before the property starts deteriorating we should sell it.

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion sell the Stotesberry's mobile home using sealed bids. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM TAX ADMINISTRATOR: Mr. Rhodes asked the Board to appoint Ms. Sherri Wilkins (current Delinquent Tax Coordinator) as the Interim Tax Administrator effective September 5, 2013.

**Commissioner Johnson made a motion to appoint Sherri Wilkins (current Delinquent Tax Coordinator) as the Interim Tax Administrator effective September 5, 2013. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

**Jury Commission**

Mr. Tim Holmes, Jury Commission member, has moved from Washington County to Pitt County and can no longer serve on the Washington County Jury Commission. Ms. Syble Spruill of Creswell has agreed to fill the vacancy created by Mr. Holmes, if the Board appoints her.

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the appointment of Syble Spruill to the Washington County Jury Commission. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried.**

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Milazi stated that the water revenue bonds closing went very well. Mr. Hutchins did a good job. The County will be saving over \$800,000. LGFCU and BB&T assisted with the closing also and the County is no longer making payments to the USDA. Chair Manning asked about the new software implementation. Mr. Milazi stated that there have been a few glitches but Edmunds is working on them. The Finance/payroll implementation is done. Public Utilities goes live tomorrow. The Tax Office implementation is on hold until some glitches are addressed. They will hopefully be converted in October.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER OR CLERK:

Commissioner Sexton attended a Farm Bureau Meeting. They discussed the fire at the Lake Phelps grain elevator. Ms. Keyes is going to look into to what can be done in the future to help with this kind of emergency. David Clifton (volunteer fire fighter) spoke about things that we don't have training on. Washington County has no training for emergency situations at graineries. Some lifesaving equipment is available. Colerain has a device to be used at graineries during emergencies and would be willing to assist us. Ms. Keyes said we used to have some training for this type of emergency years ago. Ms. Keyes will check to see if Martin Community

College offers any such training. Commissioner Sexton said it could be discussed at budget time if there was a need to add a line item for equipment or training. Chair Manning wondered Perdue would be willing to offer assistance in training or even the purchasing of equipment.

Commissioner Phelps said he and Commissioner Johnson attended the NCACC annual conference in Greensboro and she introduced him to many Commissioners. Commissioner Johnson mentioned that Commissioner Phelps was appointed to the Board of Directors as an at large director. Commissioner Johnson is running for the District 1 Board. NCACC works hard to understand rural county's needs.

Commissioner Johnson attended a NADO meeting and topics of discussion were feeding of the elderly and work force development. She went to San Francisco for training after being elected to their Board.

Commissioner Phelps and Commissioner McCray will ride in Roper's Peanut Festival Parade on September 14.

Mr. Rhodes introduced Jennifer Arnold as the new Office Assistant in the County Manager's office.

Ms. Bennett along with the Tyrrell County Clerk, Penny Owens will co-host the Eastern Regional Clerks Academy at the Eastern 4-H Center in Columbia on September 20, 2013.

Commissioner Phelps passed the BAR!

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6) (personnel) and NCGS §143-318.11(a)(4) (economic development.) Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

**At 9:05 pm, with no further business to discuss, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to recess the meeting. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

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Buster Manning  
Chair

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Julie J. Bennett, CMC, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board