

July 7, 2014

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Monday, July 7, 2014 at 7:00 PM in the Commissioners Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Johnson, Manning, Phelps, Sexton and Walker were present. Also present were County Manager Jerry W. Rhodes, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, County Attorney Curtis Potter and Finance Officer Frank Milazi.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Sexton gave the invocation; Commissioner Phelps led the pledge of allegiance.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Mr. Rhodes requested that item: 1-c) Washington County DSS Pay Plan be DELETED from the Consent Agenda and ADDED to the Closed Session under NCGS §143-318.11 (a) (6) Personnel.**

**Commissioner Phelps requested that the minutes from the June 2, June 9 and June 23 meetings be pulled from the Consent Agenda for further review.**

Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett administered the Commissioner's Oath to Mr. Julius Walker, Jr.

**CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Phelps made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the abovementioned changes:**

- a) Approval of Minutes for May 27, June 16 and June 30
- b) Tax Refunds & Releases and Insolvent Accounts
- e) ~~Washington County DSS Pay Plan~~
- d) Resolution Opposing Dissolving Elizabeth City State University
- e) Resolution Encouraging A Pilot Program To Increase Student Enrollment At Elizabeth City State University

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

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Ms. Ann Keyes, Director of Emergency Services personally thanked the emergency responders during Hurricane Arthur and thanked the Methodist Church for housing 55 Swift Water rescue personnel who were on standby in case an emergency arose in neighboring counties.

WCS Superintendent Dr. Joe Davis thanked the Commissioners for the \$600 teacher supplements. He also commented that the school system still hasn't gotten their budget from the state. Dr. Davis also stated that the teachers send their gratitude. Dr. Davis stated that he is looking forward to the Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners working together.

**PUBLIC HEARING: HEALTHY WASHINGTON COUNTY: ENCOURAGING HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES PLAN: Commissioner Phelps made a motion to open the public hearing. Commissioner Sexton seconded.**

Ms. Keyes introduced Jessie Meyers from Holland Consulting. She has focused on health assessments for other counties. This is an addendum to the Washington County Land Use Plan. Ms. Meyers hopes that Washington County will work to create a 'greenway' plan. Active Living Coordinator, Leah Mayo thanked the County Manager and the Commissioners for taking the opportunity to embrace this plan.

**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Sexton seconded.**

**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to approve the Healthy Washington County: Encouraging Healthy and Active Lifestyles Plan addendum to the Washington County Land Use Plan. Commissioner Sexton seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING: WASHINGTON COUNTY AMBULANCE FRANCHISE ORDINANCE: Commissioner Sexton made a motion to open the public hearing. Commissioner Phelps seconded.**

Mr. Potter spoke to the Board stating that before the Ambulance Franchise Ordinance can be adopted there must be a public hearing. Washington County does have an Ambulance Franchise Ordinance in place but it does not address current issues. The current ordinance does not charge any fees. Previous versions of the ordinance presented to the Commissioners did not list a fee. The new ordinance asks for a \$2,500 maximum initial fee (and a 30 minute response time) and \$2,500 recurring yearly fee. Input for the new ordinance has been given by the Medical Director in coming up with the fees. The initial application fee is \$2,500 and is a non-refundable fee for every application processed. Commissioner Phelps said he would like to know what the fees are for the surrounding counties that have ambulance franchises. The Commissioner also requested a copy of the new proposed Ambulance Franchise Ordinance before approving it.

**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Manning seconded.**

**PUBLIC HEARING: WASHINGTON COUNTY SOLAR ORDINANCE: Commissioner Sexton made a motion to open the public hearing. Commissioner Phelps seconded.**

Mr. Potter spoke to the Board stating that before the Solar Ordinance can be adopted there must be a public hearing. The Planning Board has been working on this Ordinance for a while. There is solar development throughout NC. There was an exhaustive study done by NCSU and a template ordinance was created. Nothing major has changed since the ordinance was originally provided to the Commissioners. A decommissioning clause has been added. Some solar farms have hazardous materials.

Commissioner Manning asked to delete #11 of the ordinance re: solar farm closeness to the airport. Commissioner Manning stated this item could be added at a later date if needed. There is a solar farm at Warren Field in the Beaufort County. Commissioner Sexton mentioned a study being done on solar glare and wondered if there are any results available. Mr. Potter mentioned that the FAA does not regulate solar farms which are not located on airport property.

Commissioner Manning asked if the people who want to build a solar farm in Creswell have any problems with the County's ordinance. Ms. Keyes said they have no problem with the County's ordinance.

Commissioner Manning suggested having an FAA expert come in to talk to the Board regarding the solar ordinance. Mr. Rhodes suggested that maybe it should be someone from the State Division of Aviation.

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Phelps seconded.**

**Commissioner Manning made a motion to approve the Washington County Solar Ordinance upon removing item #11. Commissioner Sexton seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

KENDRICK'S CREEK PROJECT BIDS: Mr. Keith Sawyer, Soil and Water spoke to the Board about the bids he received for the Kendrick's Creek snagging and clearing project.

The County received approval from the Army Corps of Engineers to clear and snag and remove some silt. On April 1 the Drainage Committee met to approve taking \$30,000 from the 1 cent drainage fee collected. Bids were received but there was a mistake when asking for bids that did not show the entire creek that needed to be worked on. The low bidder found out what the other bids were and then they (Blackwater) came back with another bid of \$58,000. The County could accept bids up to \$45,000, but no more. The County had to re-bid the project. The bids received were:

- Coastal Clearing & Grading \$89,000.00
- Phelps & White Const. \$86,000.00
- Blackwater Const. \$75,000.00
- Armstrong, Inc. \$64,000.00
- Harris Farms, Inc. \$15,000.00 Railroad Bed Rd. to Millpond Bridge
- Harris Farms, Inc. \$32,750.00 Millpond Bridge to Hwy 64 Bridge
- Total for Harris Farms, Inc. \$47,750.00

Mr. Sawyer stated he was bringing this before the Board because the total for the lowest bid is \$47,750, and he feels it needs the Board approval to spend this much money. Vernon Bell from the Pungo area spoke to the Board about the water that backs up in the yards of residents and the snagging and clearing would really help them. Kendrick's Creek drains thousands of acres of farmland. The low bid contractor (Harris) has stated he could start within a week. Mr. Sawyer said there were logs and debris under the bridge that have already been cleared out by the State. Mr. Sawyer also explained that as a Drainage Service District there isn't all the required permitting and with the Drainage District there. Mr. Milazi stated that there is \$170,000 in the drainage fund. Commissioner Walker stated that he was familiar with the area and the problems that occur when the water backs up.

Sterling Davenport, West Mill Pond Road spoke to the Board and stated that the work really needs to be done. Kendrick's Creek has only gotten worse over the years and laws may

change where work on the Creek may not be able to be done in the future so it needs to be taken care of now.

**Commissioner Manning made a motion to approve Harris as the low bidder for the Kendrick's Creek project. Commissioner Sexton seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

PERSONNEL POLICY CHANGE: TRANSFERS OF VACATION AND SICKLEAVE: Mr. Rhodes spoke to the Board on the abovementioned change. Here is the proposed amended policy:

**Washington County Personnel Policy  
Article VI: Employee Benefits  
Section 7: Transferring Vacation and Sick Leave from another Employer**

When a person becomes a new full-time employee of Washington County, sick leave accrued from his/her previous employer may be credited to the employee only if all of the following conditions apply:

- a) The new employee is transferring the leave balance from a State or Local Government agency; **and**
- b) The new employee was a participant in the State Employee's Retirement System or the Local Government Employees Retirement System at his/her previous employer; **and**
- c) The new employee provides official documentation of the leave balance from his/her previous employer within 20 business days after the date of hire; **and**
- d) The new employee completes six months of continuous full-time employment with Washington County.

Washington County does not accept transfer of vacation leave from an employee's previous employer. The maximum sick leave balance accepted by Washington County is 225 hours. Requests for sick leave transfers may only be approved by the County Manager within his/her sole discretion.

This is an existing policy and the County was asked to amend this after a new hire wished to transfer a large amount of leave with them. Most workplaces don't allow the transfer of vacation time. The change proposed tonight would strike vacation leave from the County's policy and only accept a sick leave maximum of 225 hours (30 days). Chair Johnson stated that the Board requested some changes in policy during their budget work sessions and feels this is a step in the right direction.

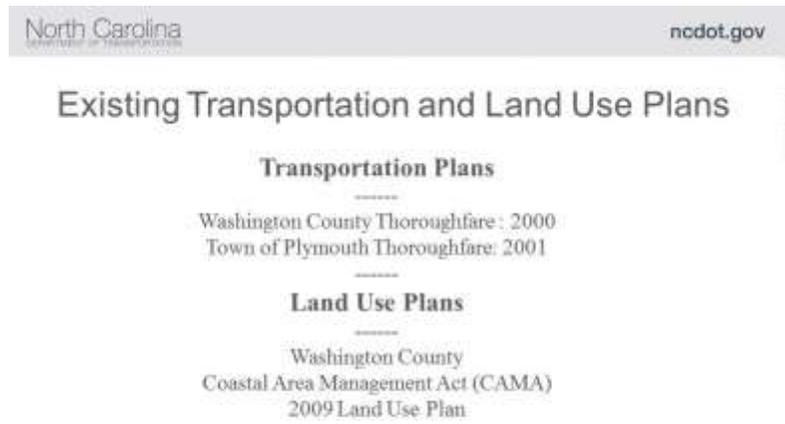
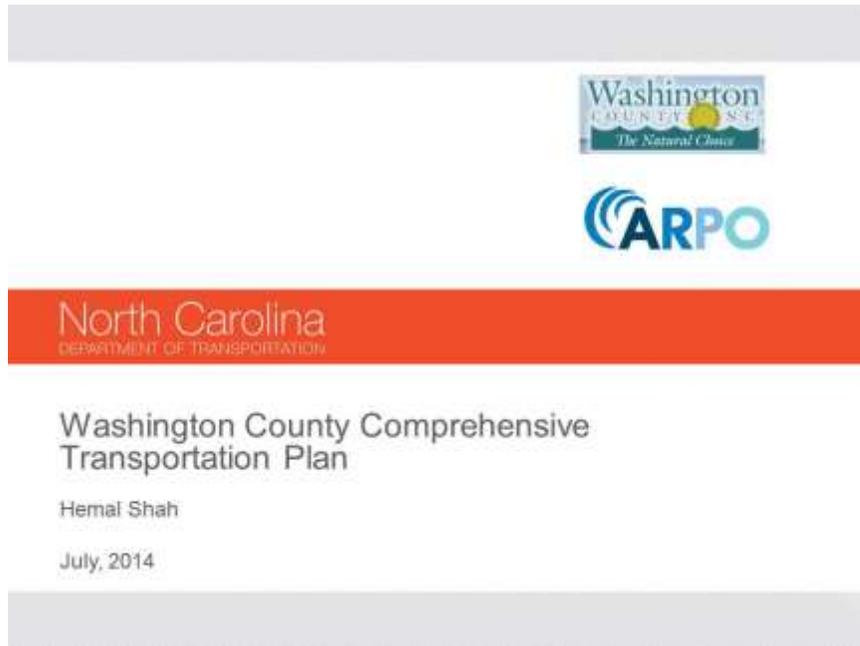
**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to approve the Personnel Policy Change: Transfers of Vacation and Sick Leave. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE TO NCACC CONFERENCE: Chair Johnson and Vice-Chair Phelps will be attending the NCACC 2014 Annual Conference to be held August 14 - 17, 2014 in Buncombe County. It is important that each county participates in the association's annual election of officers and policy adoption.

It is recommended that the Board make a motion for either Chair Johnson or Vice-Chair Phelps to be given voting credentials on behalf of Washington County at the NCACC conference.

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion appoint Vice-Chair D. Cole Phelps as the voting delegate to the NCACC Conference. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

WASHINGTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) UPDATE: Ms. Hemal Shah, DOT Engineer and Ms. Angela Welsh, Albemarle RPO gave a presentation to the Board on the Washington County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.



## What are the **Benefits** of having a CTP?

- > Common long range vision for multi-modal facilities between NCDOT, MPOs, RPOs and local governments.
- > More detailed project information for Programming and Project Development.
- > Better integration of transportation planning with land use planning.
- > Minimization of impacts to the natural and human environment.
- > Documentation that can be used as a guide for future development and transportation decisions.

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## Comprehensive Transportation Plan:

### Multimodal

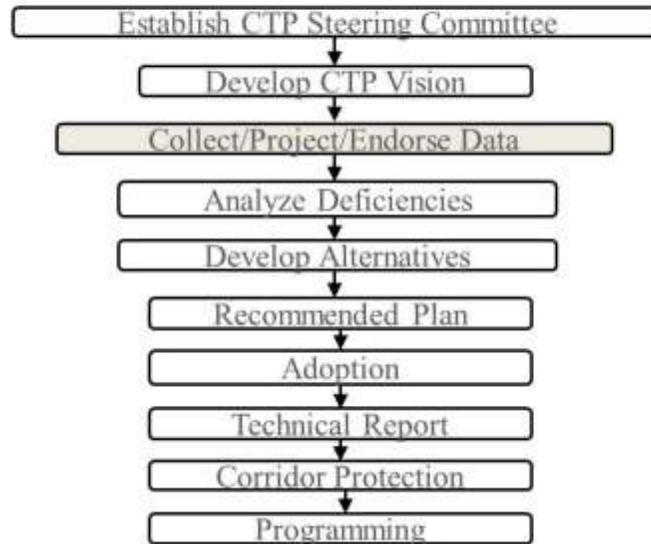
- Highway
- Public Transportation and Rail
- Bicycle
- Pedestrian

### Recommendations

- Existing,
- Needs Improvements,
- Recommended (new location)

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## Where Are We in the Process?



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## 2014 Population Estimates

2014 Population: **13,134** LINC (Log In to North Carolina) report.

Projections by LINC Report for Washington County	
1980	14,801
1990	13,997
2000	13,723
2010	13,228
2014	13,134
2020	13,073
2030	13,050

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## 2040 Population Projections

- US 64: Experienced growth in Washington County
- The Plymouth Municipal airport Expansion
- Recently added new businesses in the Area.
- Additional employment opportunities by developing the Industrial Park.

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## 2040 Population Projections

Washington County CTP Committee recommendations:

	<b>2014- 2020</b>	<b>2021-2040</b>
<b>Annual Growth Rate</b>	0.5%	1.0%

Population projections based on the CTP Committee recommendations:

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2040</b>
<b>Population</b>	13,134	13,533	16,350

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## 2014 Employment Estimates

<b>Employment</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
Washington County	5,367	5,417	5,586*	5,600**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Published in 2009 CAMA Land Use Plan)

\* InfoUSA data

\*\* Linear Projection based on past growth.

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## 2040 Employment Projections

Comparing Employment to Population

<b>Washington County</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2040</b>
Population	13,134	16,350
Employment	5,600	6,920

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## Future Questions or Concerns?

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Angela Welsh, Albemarle Rural Planning Organization  
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## Socio-Economic Data Forecasting Methodology

The Washington County CTP Committee worked with NCDOT to estimate population growth, economic development potential, and land use trends to determine the potential impacts on the future transportation system in 2040. This data was endorsed by the CTP Committee on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The established future growth rates were endorsed by the Washington County Commissioners (Anticipated on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

Below is a description of the methodology used in the analysis.

### **Population Projections:**

Population trends were estimated using historic population data from the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management and from the LINC (Log In to North Carolina) report for Washington County and its surrounding counties. Much like determining an interest rate, a population growth rate was determined using simple linear growth. Past trends and projections through the year 2030 were looked at along with the growth in population. This data is listed in the Table 1 below with the future information projected by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management.

**Table 1: Population Data**

Location	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014	2020	2030
North Carolina	5,880,096	6,656,987	8,082,261	9,535,483	10,166,530	11,039,342	12,463,244
<b>Washington County</b>	14,801	13,997	13,723	13,228	13,134	13,073	13,050

Bertie County	21,024	20,388	19,773	21,282	21,857	22,677	24,042
Chowan County	12,558	13,506	14,150	14,793	14,282	13,563	12,636
Tyrell County	3,975	3,856	4,149	4,407	4,445	4,512	4,624
Hyde County	5,873	5,411	5,826	5,810	5,731	5,609	5,403
Beaufort County	40,355	42,283	44,958	47,759	50,500	54,372	60,828
Martin County	25,948	25,078	25,546	24,505	24,461	24,404	24,309

The data presented in Table 1 indicates a slight decline in overall growth for Washington County, while surrounding counties fluctuate between a slight decline and a slight increase in population. During discussions with the Washington County CTP Committee, committee members indicated that in recent years the US 64 corridor through Washington County has experienced growth of hotels and other businesses which serve not only the residents of Washington County but vacationers heading to and leaving the Outer Banks. Further, a total of 70 businesses have recently located in the area and employ local residents. The Domtar pulp mill located in Washington and Martin counties currently employees 450 people and is seeking opportunities to expand their barge operations which could lead to more employment opportunities in the future as well. Plymouth Municipal Airport can also accommodate corporate jets and is currently in the second phase of a seven year plan of improvement. Additional employment opportunities are also anticipated to be added by developing the Industrial Park.

Considering all these factors, the Washington County CTP Committee proposed and endorsed population projections using a 0.5 % annual growth rate from 2014-2020 and 1.0% annual growth rate from 2021-2040. Using these rates, population projections utilized in the development of the CTP are given below in Table 2.

**Table 2: Washington County Projected Population**

	2014	2020	2040
Population	13,134	13,533	16,350

**Employment Projections:**

Total employment for 2010 in the Washington County was 5,586 jobs. To determine the number of future jobs in Washington County, a ratio of 2010 employment to 2010 population was calculated.

2010 Employment = 5,586

2010 Population = 13,228

Employment to Population ratio (emp/pop) = 0.4225

**Table 4: Washington County Employment**

Employment	1990	2000	2010	2014
Washington County	5,367	5,417	5,586*	5,600**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Published in 2009 CAMA Land Use Plan)

\* InfoUSA data

\*\*Linear Projection based on past growth.

The data in Table 4 indicates a slight increase in total employment. Therefore, the employment to population ratio is projected to be slightly higher for 2040 assuming the continued positive growth in the future and the potential for additional employment opportunities previously discussed. The total employment for 2040 is projected to be 6,920 jobs as calculated below.

2040 Population projections: 16,350

2040 Projected Employment to Population ratio (emp/pop) = 0.4230

2040 Employment projections:  $16,350 \times 0.423 = \mathbf{6,920 \text{ jobs}}$

DOT would like the Commissioners endorsement on the CTP recommendations of population projections and employment projections discussed above. Commissioner Phelps asked how Ms. Shah came up with the numbers. Ms. Shah stated that she used the CAMA Land Use plan. Ms. Shah went on to explain that if the figures don't show a growth in population, there would be no need for new roads and improvements in Washington County. Since Washington County has ties to Norfolk and their port, the Outer Banks which will experience growth, the Highway 32 connector, and Waterside at the Point these are all factors that could increase Washington County's population and employment numbers in the future. Ms. Shah mentioned that even though this is a 25-30 year plan, it will get updated every 5 years.

**Commissioner Phelps made a motion to approve the CTP Plan along with the projected employment and population estimates. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT AND ANNUAL SETTLEMENT: Ms. Sherri Wilkins, Tax Administrator spoke to the Board. The Board received a settlement report for the fiscal year 2013 – 2014 which ended June 30, 2014.

Ms. Wilkins explained that the tax office is run according to the laws of North Carolina. Washington County uses the Machinery Act as a reference and works closely with the Department of Revenue. The processes the tax office does are required by law. Everything from what is printed on our receipts to the County's assessment policies are governed by law.

Over the past fiscal year, the tax office has had several changes:

- The previous Tax Administrator left in September
- Roles were shifted—Ms. Wilkins was moved from being Delinquent Tax Coordinator to Tax Administrator and Ms. Darlene Harrison moved from being Tax Clerk to Delinquent Tax Coordinator.
- Other staff members are Phyllis Ange, Assistant Assessor, Denise Jones, Tax Clerk and Gail Phelps, Tax Clerk.

After the departure of the previous Tax Administrator the tax office staff worked shorthanded from September to March, their busiest time of year. Ms. Wilkins believed staff did an outstanding job during this time – they collected not only property taxes for the county and the Town of Plymouth but also drainage district taxes (countywide 1¢, Eddie Smith, DD5, Pungo River and Albemarle), motor vehicle taxes, both in the County's billing system and

working with the queues, reports and issues that arose in the new Tag and Tax or NCVTS (North Carolina Vehicle Tax System).

In December notices were posted around the County and in the Roanoke Beacon concerning the listing period for 2014 – 2015. The tax office completed the listing of Business Personal Property and Personal Property; those forms are mailed December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year and are due January 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications were processed for the Present-Use Value program and Property Tax Relief program. An audit was performed of the Present-Use Value properties by the Assistant Assessor. Second notices were sent in February. The delinquent taxpayer's advertisement was run in the Roanoke Beacon. The Board of E & R advertisement was run in the Roanoke Beacon. Reports were sent to the N C Dept. of Revenue as requested, annually there are several reports required by the NCDOR and the Office of the Fire Marshall.

The tax office worked with the contracted Appraiser to get the transfers completed and adjustments made. With the change in roles for certain positions and the addition of the newest tax office staff member in March each person had to be trained and is facing more training in the upcoming year. The School of Government requires classes for certain certifications and positions. This year each one of the tax office staff will have to take a class or classes for the position they hold. The newest tax clerk had to be trained by the Delinquent Tax Coordinator in the responsibilities she inherited from the DTC. Ms. Wilkins stated that she trained the DTC. Now they are all being trained in the new Edmunds software. They are required to implement new software for tax collection and assessing and began July 1 using the Edmunds software. The tax office is running parallel with the Elite software that is already in place as the new Edmunds software still has several issues and it is not completely prepared to stand alone as the County's collections and assessment system. Tax office staff have been working with the Edmunds personnel to work out the bugs and get the items in place needed to run the tax office, some pertinent information is incorrect or missing.

Transfers are a continuous process from the time the bills go out in July until all are completed for the next tax year, during this time tax office staff works closely with the Register of Deeds and Mapping Department.

Tax bills should be mailed by the end of July. After they are mailed, the Assistant Assessor will begin transfers that have occurred since January 1 that can now be keyed in preparation for 2015 – 2016 tax year. The contracted appraiser will be back during the fall of the year to review and appraise any new construction and any properties that have had a change. Some of this info the tax office gets from the Permits Office and some is from the taxpayers.

The Delinquent Tax Coordinator has been working with mortgage companies to assure that they receive the tax bills they have requested. She will also continue with employee garnishments, bank attachments and the debt set-off program.

Ms. Wilkins stated she has been in conversation with Mr. Potter, our County Attorney, to begin the process of foreclosures this year. Previously implementing foreclosures was delayed because the tax office was a person down and foreclosures are a labor intensive and time consuming process. Mr. Potter and Ms. Wilkins both began in their current positions in November and that is a busy time for collections and we move right into the first of the year then into the budget season and then billing.

Mr. Potter and Ms. Wilkins will work diligently to get the process in place over the next few months. Part of the process is to review the list of delinquent taxes and make sure the process is beneficial to the County in regards to the value of the property and time spent on the process.

Ms. Wilkins went on to say that as of July 1, 2014 the Town of Plymouth resumed the role of Tax Collector for their accounts. In 2012 and 2013 there was an agreement between the Town and County that the County would bill and collect the taxes for the Town. In 2012, before the tax office was able to incorporate the Town's records into the County's, several weeks were needed to make corrections in the Town's records before the County assumed the role of tax collector for them. The County tax office took on the responsibility without additional staff being added to their office. Once the County began collecting for the Town, our garnishments, attachments, debt set-off payments and collections were shared with the Town. There were days that the Delinquent Tax Coordinator would spend the whole day on a Town issue. Because of the 2 years the County was the tax collector for the Town, the County is required to keep the history for all work as required by NCGS. The County office will have to keep the Town's information separate from the County's current collections system. Although the Town will receive all their information that is in the County system with the transfer back to them, the Town will be calling on the County tax office for assistance.

In regards to some of the County's delinquent accounts, the previous Tax Administrator had agreements with several of the large taxpayer account holders that allowed them to make monthly payments. These taxpayers have rental properties and with the poor economy their renters were not paying as they should and some of their houses were sitting empty. They have sold some houses and still have some for sale. Their banks have been contacted regarding a bank attachment and the tax office was advised by the bank to work with the taxpayers in accepting their monthly payments because the money was not available to pay the taxes in full. Ms. Wilkins said she has called several farmers and was told that they will pay their taxes in full when they finish harvesting their wheat and get paid for the wheat crop. The County does have some accounts under bankruptcy and cannot enforce collections on those accounts.

The tax office staff members are cross-trained. For each job that is done, the tax office works to have at least one other person who can assist with that position or duty. This does pull the Delinquent Tax Coordinator, Assistant Assessor and Tax Administrator away from their main duties to help the front counter as needed. Because of the research required when searching for information on a delinquent taxpayer or researching the estate of someone who is deceased and trying to find their heirs the tax office staff feels that they are private investigators and when they retire they would be qualified to open up their own business with the experience received here in the County's tax office. Ms. Wilkins said that she and the tax office staff invites each Commissioner to visit the tax office at any time to sit down and see what they are doing. The tax office staff will be glad to explain what they are doing and how they do it.

Commissioner Manning asked Ms. Wilkins about the monthly payments that taxpayers are allowed to make on delinquent taxes. Ms. Wilkins said the previous tax administrator made agreements with some of the current taxpayers and the county still honors those because the banks have been contacted and found that funds were not available to be paid in full therefore the delinquent taxpayers were set up on payment plans.

Commissioner Sexton asked if the Tax and Tag program has helped with collections. Ms. Wilkins said yes the new program is helping.

Mr. Potter commented that maybe 3-5 foreclosures could be completed by the end of this year. He stated that title searches take the most time because he usually runs into snags with the titles.

Commissioner Phelps would like to see a plan to move forward to improve the County's collections.

Mr. Rhodes spoke to the Commissioners regarding a report that was sent out regarding the ranking of the NC counties tax collections. The company that created the list is in the software business for helping to collect more taxes.

Mr. Potter said that the tax office staff time that has been spent on Plymouth taxes will now be able to be used to make progress on Washington County's tax collections.

Commissioner Manning asked Ms. Wilkins if the tax office is receiving the proper service from the Edmunds folks. Ms. Wilkins stated that the two people from Edmunds that came to train the tax office staff have been very helpful, however, the tax office is finding a few issues with things that are not there that need to be there. These things need to be fixed before the County can use the Edmunds software exclusively (without Elite). Mr. Rhodes said the County will be running parallel systems until the software is developed that fixes the issues for the tax office.

Commissioner Sexton said he has seen the previous programmers name in some reports. Ms. Wilkins explained that there are some things that the previous programmer has to be involved in with providing information to Edmunds in creating the new software. Commissioner Sexton asked how much longer do we expect this to take. Ms. Wilkins said hopefully by the fall the previous programmer will not be needed. Mr. Potter noted that the previous programmer has been needed while turning over the tax collection back to the Town of Plymouth and that those expenses will be tracked from the County and the Town will be billed for these expenses.

Commissioner Manning said he had talked to the previous Tax Administrator (Chip Main) regarding companies that help to get greater tax collections by doing audits on taxpayers. Ms. Wilkins said she has talked with Mr. Rhodes about this and they will have future discussions on it. Ms. Wilkins said two of the companies said they could come do a presentation on what they offer if the Commissioner would like to hear it.

Commissioner Sexton asked about the trash fees--are they are collected separately even though they are on the tax card? Ms. Wilkins said she will check to make sure how trash fees are collected. Commissioner Sexton noted his concern that Washington County is so low on the State's list of tax collections.

EMS UPDATE: Mr. John Flemming, EMS Director, gave an update to the Commissioners.

Mr. Flemming stated that this is the first of his EMS updates that will be presented to the Commissioners. Vidant Pungo has closed down in Belhaven and this has caused transport problems for Hyde, Tyrrell and Beaufort County. Washington County EMS saw, for the first time, a Beaufort County resident calling for an intercept when crossing over into Washington

County. Washington County EMS transported patients from Vidant Pungo and Beaufort and Greenville. Mr. Flemming had a good meeting with Vidant Beaufort and has seen an increase in transport since the meeting. Vidant Beaufort has a problem finding a paramedic unit to transport to Chapel Hill and Duke so Washington County EMS may see an increase in those calls. Mr. Flemming stated the following information:

EMS calls 1 June to 1 July:	<b>290</b>
Transports hospital to hospital	<b>88</b>

EMS calls 1 July to 7 July:	<b>52</b>
Transport Hospital to Hospital:	<b>19</b>

**Earnings**

04/2014	<b>\$102,210.79</b>
05/2014	<b>\$152,470.91</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$254680.91</b>

**Transport**

04/2014	<b>\$28,581.37</b>
05/2014	<b>\$ 8,202.46</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$36,783.83</b>

Earning for June total deposits so far:

**\$131,808.50**

The numbers will change once Medicare payments are received.

Mr. Flemming also mentioned that the debt setoff is over \$200,00 (only EMS calls can go against debt set-off, not transport).

Mr. Flemming is also verifying charges with the hospital. Mr. Flemming has also received paperwork from DHHS regarding Medicaid/Medicare.

Mr. Flemming told the Board that he did implement the new staffing schedule—it started Sunday am at 7:00 am--24/48 shifts.

Commissioner Manning asked how many are currently on his staff. Mr. Flemming said he has two open positions--all other positions are filled. He also has three people out on medical leave.

Commissioner Phelps asked how the employees are transitioning to the 24/48 schedule. Mr. Flemming said change is never easily accepted, but staff understands this change was necessary. They are going to stand together.

Commissioner Sexton mentioned a recent incident where a patient was refused service at Washington County Hospital. Mr. Flemming stated he was limited in what he could discuss due

to HPPA regulations. He did say that Washington County's EMS Medical Director is looking into the situation and talking with the hospital providers.

Commissioner Manning stated that it looks like at this time Mr. Flemming has two employees less than what was authorized in the budget. Mr. Flemming said that is correct-- had to wait to July 1 to start trying to fill these positions.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Frank Milazi distributed his Finance report. Mr. Milazi stated that since the June 30 reports were distributed they remain the same.

Mr. Milazi stated that the June 30 closing completed one year with the new Edmunds software and there were no problems.

Mr. Milazi stated it is not uncommon to run two parallel programs to make sure that nothing is missing---the old software offers a way to check the new system---such as what the tax office is doing.

Mr. Milazi spoke about Medicaid---the County had problems with reporting in the past---the County was including the non-emergency transport the County was not supposed to be getting paid for this. Medicaid forgave the County for some of it, but the County is still being audited. The County may have to return some money. Mr. Milazi will keep the Board informed.

Mr. Milazi stated that Washington County Hospital still owes the County 5 months' rent on the Washington County Medical Clinic in Creswell for a total of \$11,500.

Mr. Milazi also noted that the County has a low cash flow at the moment; however, the County will meet our bills, but the County doesn't have money coming in right now. Mr. Rhodes has asked departments to defer large purchases that require a purchase requisition until September. Payroll has to be met and bills have to be paid.

Commissioner Phelps asked when the Financial Policy will be ready for adoption. Mr. Milazi stated he still working on it and needs to get with the County Manager for finalization.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIRPERSON, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER, CLERK, OR ATTORNEY:

Commissioner Phelps thanked Ms. Ann Keyes and Chief Deputy Floyd for their work during hurricane Arthur. Commissioner Phelps also requested to have Mr. Lou Manring, Public Utilities Director attend the next Commissioners meeting to discuss water billing and late fees.

Ms. Bennett noted that the ABC Board provided the Washington County Board of Commissioners with copies of their Budget Amendments for the year ending June 2014 and with copies of their proposed and approved budget ordinance and annual operating budget for 2014-2015 as is required by their statute.

**Commissioner Sexton made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(3) (attorney client-privilege), NCGS §143-318.11(a)(4) (economic**

development) and NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6) (personnel). Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Back in open session, Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the DSS Pay Plan. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

At 10:00 pm, with no further business to discuss, Commissioner Sexton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Phelps seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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Tracey A. Johnson  
Chair

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