

May 2, 2011

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Monday, May 2, 2011 at 6:00 PM in the County Commissioners' room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Alexander, Collins, Johnson, Manning and McCray were present. Also present were County Manager David Peoples, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Finance Officer Gayle Critcher and Assistant County Manager/County Attorney Cheryl Young.

Chair Johnson opened the meeting. Chair Johnson called for a motion to adjourn the April 4, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Collins made a motion to adjourn the April 4, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS: Chair Johnson added Item 10 Closed Session NCGS 143-318.11 (11)(a).

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a) Approval of Minutes
- b) NC Lottery Public School Building Capital Fund—A/C Compressor Replacement (Plymouth High) \$1,354.42

Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

EAST CAROLINA VOCATIONAL CENTER (ECVC): Mr. Bob Jones, President of ECVC presented an award to the Commissioners for supporting their recycling efforts. Their business is located in Greenville and is a non-profit business. ECVC has been in existence for 45 years and 36 of those they have been in the recycling business with the assistance of Weyerhaeuser beginning back in 1974. ECVC has a 55,000 sq ft facility that serves 10 counties in eastern North Carolina. They employ 46 people and 38 of those have severe disabilities; however, they hold full time jobs with benefits and retirement. Mr. Jones stated he is very proud to have an operation like this. ECVC wants to thank the Commissioners for the County's recycling efforts. Washington County's recycling is processed in Greenville; 24,000 tons of material went through their facility last year. Mr. Jones also explained to the Commissioners that the workers designed the certificate, cut the mat and joined the wood for the frame for tonight's presentation. Mr. Jones presented the framed certificate to Chair Johnson who accepted on behalf of the Commissioners. Mr. Jones also invited the Commissioners and the public to visit their facility anytime Monday through Friday—they are open 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.

GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS: Mrs. Kathy Waters addressed the Board. For the third year, Mrs. Waters has served as Washington County's Volunteer Coordinator for the Governor's Volunteer Awards. She always says "Our greatest resource is our people—our volunteers".

Mrs. Waters noted that two of the Local Selection Committee Members were present: Rev. Jimmy Hagwood and Mr. George Waters.

Washington County is pleased to recognize volunteers selected for the Governor's Award for Volunteer Service for 2011. For 33 years this program has honored the true spirit of volunteerism in our state by recognizing individuals, families, groups and businesses that make a significant contribution to their community through voluntary service.

The recipients are:

G. Van Carter, who is recognized in the Senior Volunteer category. Van was nominated by Amy O'Neal of the Washington County Library.

Van has volunteered with Friends of the Washington County Library for more than 5 years. He has served as President and Vice President and organized book sales and other fundraising efforts. Because of his successful fundraising efforts, each employee at the library received a Christmas bonus last year. No program has been held, no activity has been scheduled and no fundraiser has been conducted at the library without Van's leadership and attendance.

The United Fund of Washington County, Inc. was recognized in the Group/Team category. The United fund was nominated by Caroline Gurganus of the Washington County Center for Human Services.

The United Fund's all-volunteer board members engage in public awareness, fundraising activities, and advocacy efforts. They also distribute donated funds to public and non-profit organizations that support and promote the well-being of Washington County citizens. These board members are private business leaders, non-profit leaders and public officials.

Joey Charles Davenport, who is recognized in the Perseverance in Volunteerism category. Joey was nominated by Ranger Steve Rogers of the Pettigrew State Park.

For nearly two years Joey has donated eight hours weekly at Pettigrew State Park. He serves as an administrative and maintenance assistant. Despite his personal physical obstacles, he greets park visitors, assists with administrative duties including concessions, campground reservations, mowing, and general maintenance to include campground housekeeping. The Park is so impressed by Joey's perseverance and positive attitude that they just hired him in a seasonal office job. Joey is Washington County's first Medallion Award recipient, and had the opportunity to visit with Governor Beverly Perdue in Raleigh last week.

At the conclusion of the presentations, Mrs. Waters asked for all of the volunteers, their family members and the nominators to please come forward for a picture, along with Chair Johnson.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW: Chair Johnson reconvened the Commissioners as the Board of Equalization and Review. Mr. Chip Main reported that there were no appeals. Mr. Main told the Board that the last revaluation was conducted in 2005 and that the next revaluation will be in 2013. Mr. Main also stated that he does not plan to hire an outside company to conduct revaluation but use part-time help and existing staff. Commissioner Manning made a motion to adjourn the Board of Equalization & Review. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

BRIDGES & ROADS PRIORITIES FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY: At the quarterly meeting of the Southern Albemarle Association (SAA) on Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, the Vice-Presidents of the SAA were asked to talk with their County Commissioners and develop updated County priorities for Roads and Bridges. (In the SAA, Commissioner Alexander is the Vice-President representing Washington County and Julie Bennett serves on the Publicity Committee.) The SAA is in the process of updating their brochure, which was last updated in April 2005, and it will include a list of prioritized roads and bridges by County. Commissioner Alexander noted that the NC 32 connector road to US 64 is our highest priority to provide a north south access since there is a fair amount of traffic from Chowan County to the Outer Banks. Commissioner Manning made mention of a Newland Connector Road. The Commissioners were unsure if road drainage would fall under the SAA but noted that there was still in problem in the Cherry/Macedonia/Cardinal Lane areas.

The Board decided to leave ‘support airport modernization’ in the brochure and Mr. Peoples will add some additional information to that and send to Commissioner Alexander who will then send it to the proper committee of the SAA.

UPDATE ON WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMERCE CENTER BUILDING, MEDICAL CLINIC, AIRPORT PROJECTS AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Mr. Peoples spoke to the Board regarding the following projects. He noted that the County’s major construction projects are winding down to completion.

- Washington County Commerce Building—
  - 25,000 sq ft light manufacturing building
  - Brick/metal with a storefront façade/completely landscaped
  - Parking lot is paved/stripping will take place tomorrow. Capacity is 75 vehicles with room to expand
  - Handrails to front entrance and back stairs still need to be added
  - Punch list should be completed by the end of next week and be available for sale or lease
  
- Airport Projects—
  - Fuel farm is completed
  - Two 12,000 gal tanks installed, 1 for AV gas and 1 for jet fuel (The County can buy fuel at full load capacity and can get a discount on price.)
  - Tanks should last 30-35 years
  - automated credit card system....fuel available 24/7

➤ Medical Clinic

- Located in Creswell on Highway 32
- 4,000 sq ft brick building
- Scheduled to be finished May 28
- Landscaping and parking lot need to be finished—Capacity is 25 spaces and room for 2 ambulances
- Will be occupied by July 1 and operated by Washington County Hospital
- 1 doctor and 1 assistant (acting as receptionist and administrator)
- Will be open for 8 hours a day Monday through Friday

➤ Latest Legislature Information

- HB200 (budget proposal) is \$19.3 billion which is \$600 million less than what was presented in late February
  - Concern over the school lottery—reduced the county share of funds to \$55.2 million
  - House rejected school bus replacements and tort claim costs
  - Increases the school flexibility cut by \$42 million to \$347 million
  - Teachers assistants will be eliminated in grades 2-3
  - Reduces community mental health funding by \$20 million non-recurring and requires LMEs to replace another \$25 million cut by spending down fund balances, again on a non-recurring basis
  - Reduces Medicaid by \$350 million
  - Pharmacy service cuts
  - Clean Water Trust Funds will only receive \$10 million
  - Authorizes counties to enact up to \$250 for food and lodging inspections, with 10 percent of the fee going to state coffers
  - \$10 million to One NC fund and \$6 million JMAC tax credit program
  - Transfers the Employment Security Commission to the Department of Commerce
  - Proposes shifting state misdemeanors with sentences less than 180 days to county jails, and increases several judicial fees to help offset cost shift, contingent on passage of Justice Reinvestment --HB642
  - Eliminates court positions and some magistrate positions
  - Eliminates state funding to libraries
  - Eliminates veterans affairs funding to counties
  - Ferry toll on all ferries in NC (proposed)
  - Eliminates the Health and Wellness and Tobacco Trust funds
  - Redirects Golden Leaf Funds for the biennium (\$60 million) to the state's general fund
- Health & human services bill (S433) that has passed deals human services consolidation
- Another bill (S645) wants to remove cap on energy credits

- Bill (S646) is being discussed re: annexation and Mr. Peoples stated that it has “stirred up a hornets’ nest in Raleigh”. There is a moratorium in place now and will likely become a ‘study bill’.
- Another bill could repeal the law of collective bargaining for state employees (such as plumbers) that could try to form a union

Commissioner Collins made a comment as a ‘citizen’ and thanked the Board and the County Manager and the Finance Officer for all they have done to keep us from using the lottery money to service debt.

Chair Johnson also thanked the Board and Mr. Peoples for the work done on getting three major projects completed with no tax increase or indebtedness.

#### FINANCE OFFICER’S REPORT:

Ms. Critcher discussed the following Budget Appropriation Amendment/Adjustments:

- Budget Amendment 10133 (Emergency Telephone Fund) \$108,236 (request to finance and purchase the \$108, 236 Sheriff and Jail hardware/software portion of the Law Enforcement Enhancement grant not funded by 911 Board; financing would be through Government Capital Corporation; 1<sup>st</sup> payment in the approximate amount of \$24,100 to be financed by the remainder of the 50% of 911 Fund balance \$22,194 + \$1906 unexpended funds in the Sherriff Dept; 2<sup>nd</sup> payment would not be due until 7/15/2012)
- Budget Amendment 10134 (Health Clinic Project Fund—water/sewer contract change order) -\$14,351.30 (Rural Center Grant not awarded (-\$30,000) General Fund Contribution (+\$15,148.70)
- Budget Amendment 10135 (LEPC Homeland Security Oil Spill Exercise –100% Grant (+19,700.00) Unauthorized Substance Tax (+\$1,018.25) Sheriff Dept. line item transfers (-\$2,800) DSS—Energy Program (+\$3,338.00) DSS—HCCBD in-home service and Senior Center contribution to Health Clinic (+15,148.70)

Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve Budget Amendments 10133, 10134 and 10135 including the financing as stated in the explanation above. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Critcher noted that expenditures have been good however revenues have been hindered. The County is approximately ¾% behind—interest earnings down. Jail housing revenues are also down.

Ms. Critcher also stated that the County has \$2.6 million in the Capital Management Trust fund and that this is a fund that can be easily liquidated when needed.

Commissioner Manning asked Ms. Critcher how was the EMS situation and she responded that they are staying on track.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIRPERSON, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY  
MANAGER, CLERK, ETC.:

- Chair Johnson made the announcement concerning the new County Manager. (See the press release below.)

The Washington County Board of Commissioners has announced that Robert E. Bencini, III (“Rob”) has accepted the position of County Manager. Mr. Bencini will begin work on June 7, 2011 as Washington County’s Deputy County Manager. After David Peoples, the current Washington County Manager, retires on June 30, 2011, Mr. Bencini will be appointed to the County Manager position.

Master of Business Administration from East Carolina University and a Bachelor of Science from UNC-Chapel Hill. He is one of just sixty Certified Economic Developers in the State of North Carolina.

Mr. Bencini’s professional career includes serving Guilford County as Director of Community and Economic Development and overseeing a variety of County Departments, including Planning and Zoning, and administering a 5.5 million dollar budget.

Tracey Johnson, Chair of the Washington County Commissioners said that Washington County is extremely fortunate to have been able to attract someone of Mr. Bencini’s experience, education and track record of success. His expertise in economic development should allow the County to continue moving forward in its development and positioning as a world class organization.

For questions or additional information, contact Tracey Johnson at (252) 793-5823.

- Chair Johnson also reiterated that Frank Milazi was hired to replace Ms. Critcher as Finance Officer.
- Chair Johnson stated that the Washington County Budget will be presented to the Commissioners at the May 9, 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting to be held at 6:00 pm in the Commissioners’ Room.
- Mr. Peoples reminded the Board that May 25, 2011 is County Assembly Day in Raleigh. The NCACC has asked counties to meet with their representatives to discuss what the major items are and discuss some of the legislation that is being debated and its impact on each county. Mr. Peoples commented that NCACC hopes to help move the legislation in a favorable direction. Mr. Peoples asked if our Board would like to meet with Senator Stan White and Representative Tim Spear either on Monday, Friday or possibly Saturday here at our offices when they are traveling to Raleigh; or the Commissioners could travel to Raleigh and meet them in Raleigh on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. The NCACC has asked for the feedback from the meetings held and wants to put a strategic plan together so the NCACC can represent the counties to the best of their abilities.

Commissioner Alexander asked Mr. Peoples to contact Senator White and Representative Spear and see when they can meet with our Board.

- Commissioner Johnson stated that she spoke with L.C. Hoggard, chair of the Bertie County Board of Commissioners. Chair Hoggard wanted Commissioner Johnson to pass along his thanks to Emergency Management and the Chamber of Commerce and other citizens that have helped with the relief effort of Bertie County. Chair Hoggard was very thankful for the help that has come over from our County.

Commissioner McCray made a motion to go into Closed Session. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McCray made a motion to recess the meeting. Commissioner Collins seconded, motion carried unanimously.

---

Tracey A. Johnson  
Chair

---

Julie J. Bennett  
Clerk to the Board