

September 6, 2016

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Tuesday, September 6, 2016 at 6:00 PM at the Commissioners' Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Johnson, Manning, Phelps, Sexton and Walker were present. Also present were County Manager Willie Mack Carawan, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Assistant County Manager/County Attorney Curtis Potter and Finance Officer Missy Dixon.

Chair Phelps called the meeting to order. Commissioner Manning gave the invocation; Creswell Student Chris Betts led the pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None.

CONSENT AGENDA: **Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda:**

- 1a) Approval of Minutes
- 1b) Tax Refunds & Releases and Insolvent Accounts
- 1c) Southern Albemarle Association Delegates
- 1d) Updating Pay Tables
- 1e) DSS FY2016-2017 Rural Operating Assistance Program Grant Application
- 1f) Travel & Tourism Authority (TTA) By Laws Amendment
- 1g) Boards & Committees

Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: Mr. Lloyd Jones, Jr., 842 Gourd Neck Road, Roper, stated that next year he would like to have the county citizens have a 4% discount on their taxes since they didn't get to take the 2% discount this year.

Ms. Melanie Perry, 4686 NC Hwy 32 S, Plymouth, stated that Washington County Hospital (WCH) received some damage from Hurricane Hermine and so did the Clinic. Ms. Perry also noted that WCH will be holding its first Employee Recognition Banquet this year December 14 at the Vernon James Center.

Ms. Vickie Blackwell, 77 Pelican Lane, Roper, said she is now a full-time resident. On behalf on the Pelican Lane residents she thanked the Board on the steps they have taken to alleviate the abandoned structures in the County.

Mr. Louis Wilkins, 301 Crossroads, Roper, asked the Commissioners what money did Social Services receive for services this year and how was it spent? Commissioner Manning asked wouldn't it be up to DSS to give him the info? Mr. Carawan said that the information should come from the Finance Office. Mr. Wilkins stated he wants information on State and Federal monies that were received and how it was spent. Chair Phelps asked that staff contact Mr. Wilkins at 252-741-1029 when the information is ready to be picked up.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: Chair Phelps stated that the Employee of the Month Program started in February of this year. This will be the 8th employee awarded. Chair Phelps stated that this month's recipient has been with the County for 14 months. Previously, he worked in Edgecombe County, Wayne County and Georgia. The nominator wrote this of the nominee: "this person has gone above and beyond the call of duty. He is willing to staff trucks when emergencies arise to keep the County covered. He has worked every football game, drag race and boat race. He goes beyond his required duties out of his desire to see Washington County EMS succeed and to keep the citizens safe." The September Employee of the Month is Andrew Coccaro, EMS Director. Ms. Arnold will take Mr. Coccaro's picture and it will be placed on the wall in the foyer of the County Administration Building.

EXPLANATION OF DELAYED TAX BILLS: Ms. Sherri Wilkins, Tax Administrator spoke to the Board. Ms. Wilkins went over the information below.

Discount Process:

Per NCGS 105-360:

- Has to be adopted by the County Commissioners before May 1st - It was Adopted April 4, 2016
- It was submitted to the NCDOR for approval - Rec'd approval letter dated April 12, 2016 from NCDOR
- Required to advertise the discount notice in a newspaper having general circulation in the taxing unit - Advertised April 27, 2016

Tax Bill Process:

- June 24th Budget Adopted - Contacted Programmer that the budget had been adopted
Programmer began work on the changes but he needed the tax assessment numbers before we could begin "trouble-shooting"
- June 30th Monthly Closeout was completed for June and Darlene Fikes and I began the Year-end Closeout. This needs to be completed to create figures for the bills
This takes several days to complete. We are also creating the assessment and bill reports for the municipalities and reports for the Auditors, Finance, DSS, Mapping and Landfill
- July 5th The Annual Tax Year Settlement needs to be presented - NCGS 105-373
- July 8th The Credit Balances that were already in tax collections had to be adjusted, in the past we billed by account number so the credit balance would be printed on the bill for the account number but because of the discount this year the tax bills were printed per parcel and the PIN & Parcel # had to be added to the credit balance entry and it had to be distributed (broken out as taxes, solid waste fee, discount, late list penalty). I was out sick on July 11th & 12th, Darlene Harrison completed this in 3 days.
- July 14th Once the bill file was created it had to be checked for calculation errors. Those were corrected but it took several days
We checked each scenario for Real and Personal Property (Combined or Individual) with and without Exemptions & Exclusions: County Taxes only (with & without the SWUF County & Creswell Taxes, County Taxes with Drainage Taxes, County & Creswell Taxes with Drainage, we checked each one again if they had a prepayment or a prior balance. If there was a prior balance we checked that the August and September figures were calculating the additional interest correctly
We found problems and they were fixed.
- July 25th Once the bill assessments were verified the bill file had to be sent to the printers. Because we changed the format of the tax bill notice they had to reformat the bill. While I had previously notified them of the change they had to have the bill file to make their changes
- July 25th Mortgage Companies were emailed the bill file
- July 27th When adding the bill assessments to tax collections we had to verify that the discount was calculating correctly with a full or partial payment
 - NCGS 105-320 - Lists the information that has to be included on the Tax Receipt (tax bill). Although the tax bills weren't mailed by July 31st the discount for July had to be listed
 - The UNC School of Government was contacted to see if the Discount for July could be extended. It stands as adopted, no extension.
- August 1st The Order to Collect needs to be signed - NCGS 105-321

In the future:

- After the budget is adopted, we can:
 - Post a Discount Notice on the County's Website, Facebook, in the office & around the county like we do for Listing Notices
 - Advertise a "Notice to Pay in July to Receive Discount" ad in the Beacon the first week of July

Mr. Carawan said the programming issue equates to about 2.5 weeks in the delay. Now that this programming is in place, next year it will not be a factor.

Chair Phelps asked on what date the Tax Office realized that the bills wouldn't go out in July. Ms. Wilkins stated they didn't realize they would be going out late until July 25 when the printers said they had problems. Chair Phelps said he hopes if the Tax Office has such problems in the future that it is communicated more clearly to the Board and the citizens.

OLD BUSINESS:

Trillium Playground Status: Mr. Curtis Potter, ACM/Attorney, stated that the playground equipment arrived today. Trillium will be trying to host an event to showcase the equipment.

Easements for the Water/Sewer Lines at the Commerce Building: Mr. Curtis Potter, ACM/Attorney spoke to the Board regarding the following information.

- An internal timeline from staff for the completion of the acquisition of the easements was provided to the Board at its 8/1/16 meeting.
 - That original timeline is included below reflecting those portions that are completed as of the date of this MEMO, and also containing additional notes and modifications (reflected in bold and ~~line-through~~) to adjust the original timeline for a 1 – 2 week delay that has occurred due to staff resource constraints and additional modifications made as a result of completing the legal research related to the potential condemnation proceedings.
- 8/5 Finalize title work and project update letter for affected property owners informing owners of the County's desire to obtain all easements by October, 2016 and inviting owners to attend the Community Meeting described below
- **NOTE: Some title work remains incomplete but is expected to be completed by 9/9**
- 8/8 Finalization of the legal instruments to be used in obtaining easements
- 8/15 Finalization of the legal research regarding eminent domain/condemnation (if required)
- 8/22 Community Meeting for interested property owners (6PM Commissioners Room)
- 9/1 Send follow-up pre-condemnation letters from 8/22 Community Meeting
- 9/6 Update Board of Commissioners at its Regular Meeting
- 9/7 **Send 30 day pre-condemnation letters**
- 9/9 **Complete Title Work as indicated above and send any remaining 30 day letters**
- ~~9/2~~ 9/9 Half way checkpoint: Substantial progress should have occurred by this point in the form of having already received numerous voluntary easements, and identifying those that may be potential issues. Staff will prepare to file any necessary legal actions for properties where no contact has been made with property owners, or where negotiations lead staff to believe a voluntary easement will not be obtainable.
- **NOTE: As of 9/2 the County has established contact with the owners of approximately 17 of the 30 lots with overall positive feedback. Several have indicated they prepared to execute the necessary easements. Due to the 1-2 week delay, the half way measurement deadline has been pushed back to 9/9. An update will be sent to the Board after this date.**
- 10/3 Update Board at its 10/3 BOCC Mtg
- ~~9/9~~ 10/7 Begin filing any necessary legal actions to obtain property by eminent domain/condemnation where the primary focus of any such action will be the identification of unknown or missing parties, and the fair compensation for the value of the property obtained.
- ~~10/4~~ 10/14 Complete easement acquisitions
- Staff has also been engaged with the Wooten Company to keep them advised of the current timeline, and to discuss particular areas of focus for the upcoming project components.

Mr. Potter stated this will be high on his radar for the next couple of weeks to get this completed.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the October meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

Service District: Mr. Curtis Potter, ACM/Attorney told the Board that Mayor Blount thought that Roper would like to be included in the Kendrick's Service District and will be discussed at the September Roper Town Council meeting. Mr. Potter said he had provided Mayor Blount with materials to use in her discussion.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the October meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

Ambulance Purchasing Update: Mr. Curtis Potter, ACM/Attorney gave an update on the purchase of ambulances.

- During the finalization of the budget the Board directed staff to bring back for its consideration and approval the final plan for the purchase of any ambulances during this fiscal year.
- At the 8/1/16 Board meeting, the EMS Director discussed the ability to purchase two van-style ambulances for approximately the same cost as one box-style ambulance and the Board approved this concept.
- Staff has been working since that meeting on the purchasing process to use in purchasing two such ambulances.
- Due to the total amount at issue, initially a formal request for bid process was discussed, which would require a publicly advertised RFB, sealed bids, public bid opening, and potential award.
- To expedite the purchase process, two alternative methods of procurement have also been considered by staff including a piggy back contract (purchasing an identical item already purchased under another competitively bid contract entered into by another local government in the last 12 months at the same price), or purchasing through a cooperative purchasing program (purchasing under a master contract competitively bid and selected by a cooperative purchasing program, the members of which are entitled to purchase the same items at the same price).
- Staff is continuing to review the potential use of a cooperative purchasing program which Wayne County recently purchased an ambulance under, if it can determine that the type of ambulance offered under the program meets Washington County's requirements and costs less than or the same as other quotes (\$132,650 & \$138,625) plus tax/tags received for two similar ambulances from other companies.

Mr. Potter said the County needs to pursue a formal bidding process which will take 3-4 weeks to complete. Sealed bids will be solicited and the County will have a bid opening and award to lowest qualified bidder(s). Commissioner Walker asked if the County is looking at purchasing (2) two ambulances and Mr. Potter replied yes.

Chair Phelps asked if the Board will be able to approve the bid to buy these two new ambulances. Mr. Potter replied yes.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the October meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

County Legislative Goals for 2017-2018: Chair Phelps stated that the deadline for turning in the County's Legislative Goals is Friday, September 23. He reiterated the goals previously mentioned by the Commissioners:

- Commissioner Manning stated he would like to see no unfunded mandates.

Commissioner Johnson stated that goals are being worked on by the NCACC for all the counties, but there is nothing like one on one with our representatives to let them know what Washington County needs.

- Chair Phelps said he would like to see the match for PARTF grants for rural counties be reduced.
- Commissioner Johnson said she would like to see matching grants being reduced for airport grants for Tier 1 counties.
- All of the Commissioners agreed that restoring the lottery funds to 40% for Education was something they would like to see. The school's portion is now down to 17%.

Commissioner Johnson said she would like to look into PILT grants for Federal land.

Chair Phelps asked the Commissioner to let the Clerk know if they have any more suggestions so the goals can be sent to the NCACC by the deadline of September 23.

Maintenance of County Property-Grass Mowing Status: Mr. Potter said one bid was received by the deadline of Friday at 5:00 pm. It came in a little high. The bid exceeded the amount that the County Manager felt the County could afford. This bid was also only for ½ of the acreage that needs to be mowed. Mr. Carawan said he will be working with this bidder to get the stumps ground at the Commerce Building. A staff member suggested that we look at offering a 2-year mowing contract in February before contractors get tied down with other jobs.

Commissioner Manning said another alternative could be to hire a part-time person and that might save money. Commissioner Sexton said the County would also need a truck and trailer to get the equipment from each location if we went that route.

Commissioner Manning said the mowing contract should be re-advertised. Commissioner Sexton said this is the busy season for those who offer these services. He also said the County should ask for bids during winter so those folks would have time to put in bids—give it a few more months.

Commissioner Manning suggested splitting up the parcels and have them bid on the contract by location.

Chair Phelps said he would disagree with what has been said about putting off the mowing contract. Chair Phelps said he gets calls every week about grass and then he calls the County Manager. Chair Phelps said he doesn't feel that putting out the mowing contract for bid should be put off for a few more months. Chair Phelps wants the staff to be able to handle the mowing.

Mr. Carawan said over the past few weeks there have been some issues with the County equipment.

Commissioner Walker asked if Mr. Carawan would talk to the one bidder to see if they would renegotiate their price.

Commissioner Sexton said getting into the fall that the grass won't be growing as quickly and the County should take the time to advertise for additional bids.

Mr. Carawan said the bid was for \$70.00/acre for 4 parcels (18.5 acres) and the cost would be \$1,295/week. Chair Phelps asked if the County Manager has found where the money will come from to fund the contract. Mr. Carawan said there is a budget amendment in the Commissioners' package for the mowing contract—money will be used from prior year taxes and DSS Admin revenues. Mr. Carawan said the budget amendment in their package is not the same as what he just quoted because he didn't have the bid in hand when the budget amendment was created.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion negotiate with the bidder down to \$60/acre to mow the acreage he bid on for the remainder of this mowing year (Sept/Oct/Nov) and for the County Manager to sign the contract for the next 3 months. Commissioner Walker seconded. Chair Phelps would like the negotiation to move quickly. Commissioner Sexton asked if the bidder needs to have a contractor's license. Ms. Keyes said no because the contract is under \$30,000.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the September 19 meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

Courthouse Awning Proposals: Mr. Carawan stated that no bids were received. Staff will reach out to contractors again.

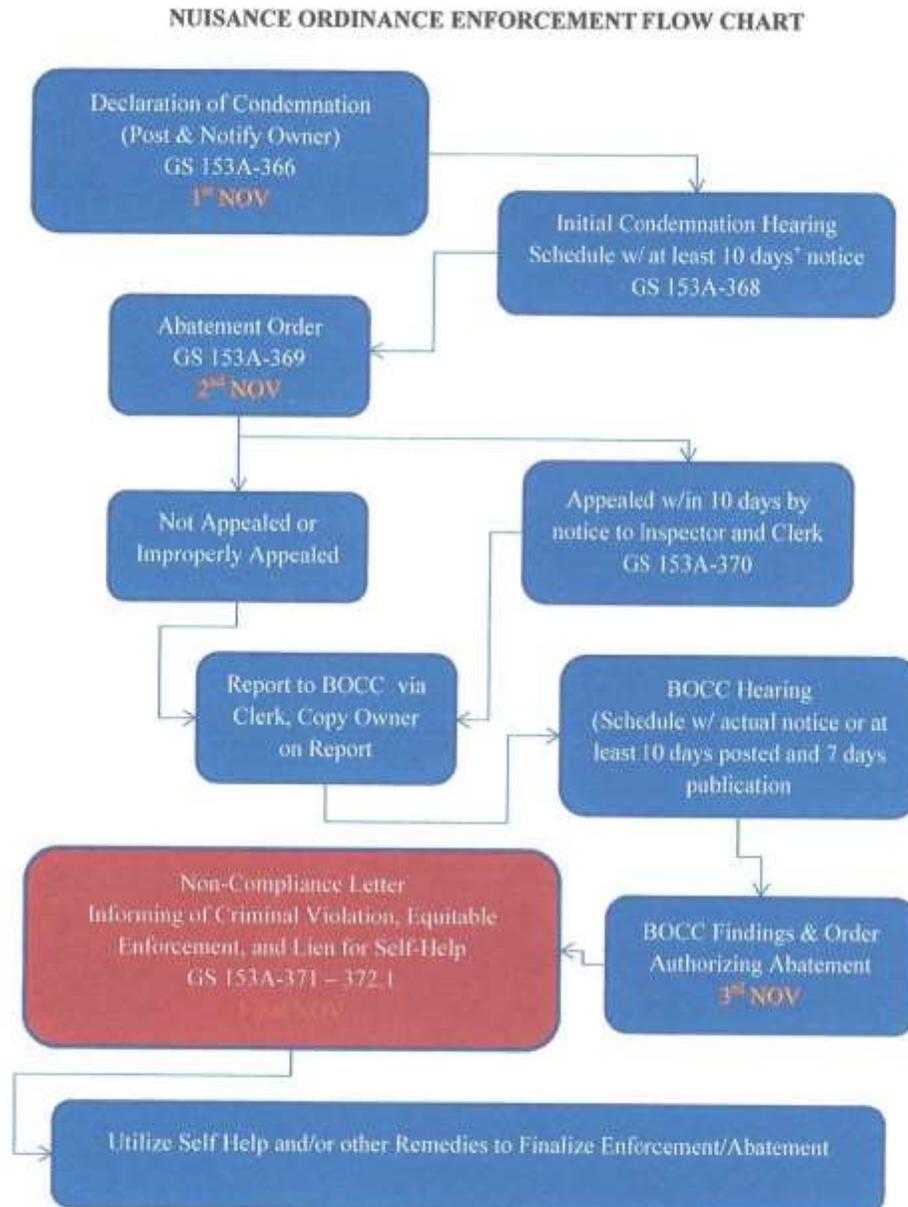
The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the September 19 meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

Roanoke Development Center (RDC) Presentation : Chair Phelps called on Mr. Zeb Taylor, RDC Director to speak to the Board. Mr. Taylor thanked the Board for the opportunity to tell the Board about the RDC. The RDC has been in business since 1975. They cater to citizens with disabilities such as Downs Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy. Some have mental health issues. Some have physical ailments. RDC tries to help these individuals be able to function in the community. RDC has four (4) group homes—they are HUD built homes. Most of the residents attend the RDC day programs. The RDC building is paid for and rented from the County for \$1.00. RDC operates its own transportation. When RDC began, the Department of Transportation (DOT) wanted a coordinated system between RDC and DSS. At that time, DSS didn't have any vehicles so RDC gave up its vehicles so DSS could have their transport system and RDC gets paid mileage.

Commissioner Sexton asked Mr. Taylor how many clients RDC has. Mr. Taylor replied that they have 40 clients. Commissioner Sexton asked what counties are they from. Mr. Taylor replied that they are from Washington, Tyrrell and Hyde counties.

Mr. Taylor also stated that two (2) of their facilities are in Plymouth, one (1) is in Tyrrell County and one (1) is in Fairfield (Hyde County). These facilities use 35 employees. They staff four (4) homes 24/7 and there is shiftwork involved. The Board thanked Mr. Taylor for coming and speaking at the meeting.

Nuisance Ordinance Update: Mr. Potter provided the Board with a flow chart to show the process works for enforcing the Nuisance Ordinance.



NOV = Written Notice of Violation of Nuisance Ordinance

Mr. Potter talked about the Affidavit. Mr. Potter also said he had tried to meet with the owners of Pelican Lane property in violation of the Ordinance, but they did not show up for the meeting.

Chair Phelps asked about the timeline for the flowchart. Mr. Potter said it is somewhere between 90-120 days. The Pelican Lane property should be done by the end of this year.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the September 19 meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

May Dayz Funding: Mr. Carawan stated that the revenues from the Business Personal Property (BPP) audits could be used for May Dayz funding. Chair Phelps said that the request of \$2,500 was made at the last meeting and feels that since the Bear Festival was funded, that May Dayz should be funded also.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the funding request of \$2,500 for the May Dayz Festival being held in Creswell in May, 2017. Commissioner Walker seconded. Commissioner Manning asked what is their projected budget for that that festival. Ms. Paulique Horton said the budget is not set yet. They are looking for donations, doing fundraisers and depending on the success, would like to have it every year. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Update on Back-up PSAP: Mr. Carawan said Deputy Jewell submitted the application for the backup PSAP for \$1,378,097 and the County was only awarded \$344,524. Mr. Carawan said just the equipment alone is \$300,000. Renovation costs of the building in Roper would be \$350,000 - \$400,000 and this money is not available. Mr. Carawan said Ms. Johnson is asking for reconsideration but is skeptical that we will receive any additional money.

Mr. Carawan said he would rather have a building that the County owns and have a Public Safety Center. In talking with Ms. Keyes, there may be some funding for such a thing. The Sheriff said it would be better for the County to own its building. If the County starts from scratch the County won't have to worry about long term leases. Mr. Carawan said adding on out at the Water Plant might be possible. Commissioner Manning asked how many acres are at the Water Plant. Ms. Keyes said approximately 5 acres. Mr. Carawan said the County can justify making the change to the E911 plan for the County to have our own building.

Mr. Carawan asked the Commissioners are they willing to accept the reduced amount offered by the E911 Board. Commissioner Walker asked if the money will cover the equipment. Mr. Carawan said yes it will cover the equipment. Commissioner Walker said he was ok with that. Commissioner Sexton agreed. Commissioner Manning asked would the \$344,000 cover a building. Mr. Carawan said no it would not cover the cost of the building.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the Water Plant property is set up for all the traffic that would be going in and out. The Sheriff did not have an answer for that. Mr. Carawan said an engineering study would need to be done.

Chair Phelps said the Mid-County fire department has offered land to the County.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to amend the plan for the backup PSAP and accept the reduced amount. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Carawan said he will meet with Ms. Johnson, Ms. Keyes and Mr. Coccaro to see what their needs are and work on getting the square footage needed also.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the September 19 meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

Strategic Plan Update: Mr. Carawan, with the help of Ms. Liverman, gave the following presentation on the Strategic Plan.

Timeline of Planning Process

September 2, 2014 Board Meeting:

- Recognized the 2006 strategic plan was out of date.
- The Board of Commissioners (BOC) motioned to use a UNC SOG intern's assistance to create a new strategic plan

October 6, 2014 Board Meeting:

- Clerk to the Board presented proposed date for a day and a half retreat

Washington County Strategic Plan

A Chronological Summary from Beginning to Midpoint

Presented by Strategic Plan Committee

Timeline Contd.

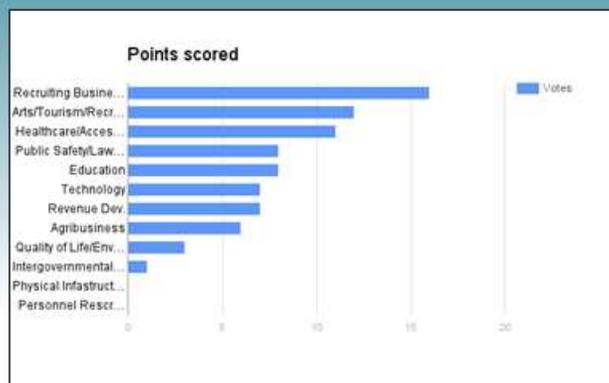
December 1, 2014 Board Meeting:

- Upon feed back from UNC SOG, the BOC was informed there was a cost for the intern program.
- A day and a half retreat with UNC SOG would cost \$2000.
- The Kenan Institute, from beginning to end, would cost about \$9,000.
- The Washington County Cooperative Extension Director could facilitate that planning process at no charge.
- The Board agreed to go forward, using the Cooperative Extension's services.

December 13, 2014 Strategic Planning Session:

- A 23 member group (appointed county employees and Commissioners) met to work on a three-year strategic plan.
- Major County Topics were presented, voted on to categorize by cluster, and moved through a SWOT process.

County Clusters



SWOT Analysis Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats for Recruiting Businesses

Strengths:

- Highway/Rail/Water/Air Access
- Agricultural
- Recreational Opportunities

Weaknesses:

- Technology/ Broadband
- Affordable Housing/ Rental
- Public Access to Sound

Opportunities:

- Agricultural/Timberlands
- Agritourism/ Hunting/ Fishing/ Recreation
- Roper Annex / Commerce Building

Threats:

- Deteriorating Downtown
- Hospital
- Negative Perception of County

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats for Arts/Tourism/ Recreation

Strengths:

- Ecotourism Growing Industry
- Hunting/ Fishing/ Boating
- Historical/Heritage Tourism
- TTA

Weaknesses:

- Access to Sound/ No Public Beach
- Lack of Recreation Complex/ Transportation
- Missed Opportunities to Piggyback Events

Opportunities:

- Festivals/ Airshows
- Development of Recreation Businesses/Wildlife
- County Fair

Threats:

- Lack of Funding
- Power Struggle
- Lack of Childcare for Events That Are Not Child Friendly
- Lack of Venture Capitalists

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats for Healthcare

Strengths:

- Outstanding Paramedic Service
- MTW Health Dept. Sliding Scale
- Creswell Clinic

Weaknesses:

- Mental Health Access/ Availability
- Lack of Healthcare Providers
- MTW Available Services for ALL Services

Opportunities:

- Establishment of Secondary Clinics
- Creswell Clinic

Threats:

- No Doctor in ER 24/7
- Future of Hospital

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats for Public Safety

Strengths:

- Fire Protection
- Faith Based/ Hispanic Population
- Mutual Aid with Other Counties and Statewide

Weaknesses:

- Inadequate Fire Supply/Water System
- Panic Alarm System for County Buildings
- EMT Schedule/ Salary

Opportunities:

- Community Paramedicine
- Restructuring of Sheriff's Office

Threats:

- No Space for Plymouth EMS
- Lack of Hospital

Timeline Contd.

March 13, 2015 Strategic Planning Session:

- Stakeholders reconvened and discussed the action items and necessary partners

May 4, 2015 Board Meeting:

- The BOC was presented the action items
- Items needed to be prioritized.
- Upon the prioritization, holding a public meeting was encouraged

August 3, 2015 Board Meeting:

- After the prioritization meetings, BOC received samples on how to focus on prioritized clusters
- BOC agreed to meet again to filter through the information presented.

August 17, 2015 Board Meeting:

- BOC met and clustered the task areas and assigned the tasks in order to assure they get completed.
- Sub-committees, compiled of county employees and community members, were formed for the 5 clusters
- BOC turned over the action items to the subcommittees

Appointing Cluster Committee Members

August 2015

Commissioners met to refine the Cluster Areas and to assign leaders and team members

- **Recruiting Business** = [Curtis Potter](#), [Cathy Davison](#), [Lentz Stowe](#), Knapp Brabble, Willie Mack Carawan, [Tom Harrison](#)
- **Arts/Tourism/Recreation** = [Tom Harrison](#), Chamber Director, Museum Director, Cole Phelps, Randy Fulford
- **Health Care** = [Jean Alexander](#), Renea Price, Melanie Perry, Terrell Davis, [Syble Spruill](#)
- **Law Enforcement/Public Safety/EMS** = [Ann Keyes](#), Delisa Johnson, Andrew Coccaro, Willie Mack Carawan

**Blue names are Community Members*

Roadblocks and Delays

- Strategic Planning Session with Team Leaders
October 2015 - cancelled due to Storm
- 3 of the 4 Clusters had member vacancies
(Hospital, Chamber, Museum, County Mgr.)
- New Manager started January 2016

Midpoint Check-in: Business Recruitment

Accomplishments

- Worked with Legislators and Beaufort County Community College (BCCC) to successfully open the Roper Annex as the BCCC Washington County Center in January 2016.
- Also located the Northeast Workforce Development at same location.

Funding Related Challenges

- Locating Grant Funds for Economic Development Position
- Feasibility Study for Marketing Plan
- Business Tax Incentives

Midpoint Check-in: Business Recruitment

Next Steps/ Goals

- **FT ED Director:**
 - Check with Golden Leaf regarding grant funding
 - Develop a job description
- **Marketing Plan:**
 - Collaborate with Branding Committee (tourism) for a countywide brand by January 2017
 - Recreate and market comprehensive ED website based on other successful models from neighboring counties
 - Develop Business Creation Flowchart
- **Incentives:**
 - Revise and approve incentive package for Commerce Building (jobs for reduced rent)
 - Get additional ED incentive resources from Tim Ivey with Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina
 - Expand Business Start Up Committee to include entire county

Midpoint Check-in: Arts, Tourism, Recreation

Accomplishments

- Black Bear Festival successfully hosted two years in a row
- County promotions through various media sources.
- Roger Brooks Branding Process started

Funding Related Challenges

- PARTF Grant Matching Funds

Midpoint Check-in: Arts, Tourism, Recreation

Next Steps/ Goals

- Planning 3rd Annual Black Bear Festival
- Continue County Tourism Promotion Efforts
- Complete branding process in the first quarter of 2017
- Suggests Pursue Parks and Recreation Funding for boardwalks, kayak/canoe launch and public swim beach
- Community Event Collaborations with local civic groups

Midpoint Check-in: Healthcare

Accomplishments

- Creswell Clinic leased to RCCHC since March 2016

Funding Related Challenges

- Incentives for Medical Talent Recruitment
- Feasibility Study for Universal Healthcare Approach

Midpoint Check-in: Healthcare

Next Steps/ Goals

- Support weekend walk-in Clinic at WCH on Saturday and Sunday from 8am-12pm
- In progress- 3 year contract
- Medical Talent Recruitment through Rural Health Loans Forgiveness Programs-creating incentives for recruitment success
- Continue Supporting Mental Health by evaluating needs
 - Vidant Health
 - A Plus
 - Trillium

**Funding is needed for all programs to succeed*

Midpoint Check-in: Public Safety

Accomplishments

- E911 Staff Completed EMD training
- PSAP plan in place- move E911 to Roper and use Courthouse for backup site
- Panic Alarm Installations made in select County Offices
- Dry Hydrant Ponds Identified and completed

Funding Related Challenges

- Relocation of EMS

Midpoint Check-in: Public Safety

Next Steps/ Goals

- Build new E911 location this year
- Complete Panic Alarm Installations by October
- Cross Training for new Sheriff Office Hires
- Relocation of EMS facility

What's Next?

- Cluster Committees continue to pursue goals
- Reevaluate and update Board on progress January and July 2017 to have plan completed and/ or revised in December 2017
- Pursue Incorporation of DOC resources into the Business Recruitment Plan

Chair Phelps asked why wasn't the Recreation Center on the Arts/Tourism slide. Ms. Liverman said that the group did not see it as a priority.

Chair Phelps said the last strategic plan was a vision plan. He sees no vision in this plan. Chair Phelps said that he thought that the Board originally wanted to have some community meetings and he hasn't seen those happen.

Commissioner Walker said that this is a great start and would recommend that the community be involved. Mr. Potter said that the Board decided to create the clusters that would be led by community leaders.

The Chair asked the Clerk to add this to the October meeting to see what progress has been made on this project.

WASHINGTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROPOSAL: Mr. Potter said that after the budget process was completed, the County Manager reached out to Mr. Lee Padrick, Rural Planning Center, NC Department of Commerce. Mr. Padrick agreed to come and speak to the Board. Mr. Padrick told the Board that he assisted with the first plan that was created in 2006. Mr. Padrick said he met with Mr. Potter and Mr. Carawan and came up with the following Economic Development Plan.

Washington County Economic Development Plan



Pictures courtesy of www.washconc.org

Response to Request for Services
September 6, 2016



Who We Are

The Main Street & Rural Planning Center is part of the NC Department of Commerce, the state's lead agency for workforce, community and economic development. In this capacity, the Rural Planning Center provides technical assistance across the state primarily in the areas of economic development planning. The Rural Planning Center has offices located in the West (Asheville), the Piedmont (Winston-Salem), and the East (Washington). Experienced staff partner with local governments and associated organizations to add value to community and regional economic development efforts.

Services Offered

Whether rural communities are planning future economic expansion, injecting life into existing structures, or developing in an economically challenged area, the Rural Planning Center staff can help them reach their goals through targeted assistance in three core areas: economic development analysis, special projects support, and grant assistance.

Washington County Economic Development Plan

The Rural Planning Center suggests that the County develop an economic development plan that will identify the major issues and develop actionable items to address these issues. An economic development plan, with a five (5) year time horizon, will better position the County for grant opportunities and provide a framework to meet job creation and economic prosperity opportunities. A Steering Committee of ~10 people, representing a cross section of the County, should be appointed.

Public Input

As part of the public input process, an online economic development survey can be developed and conducted online. An online survey, using the NC Department of Commerce's survey tool, has had an above average response rate in the past in other jurisdictions, and the lower cost of conducting an online survey is preferable to mailed/paper surveys. This process is flexible and customizable.

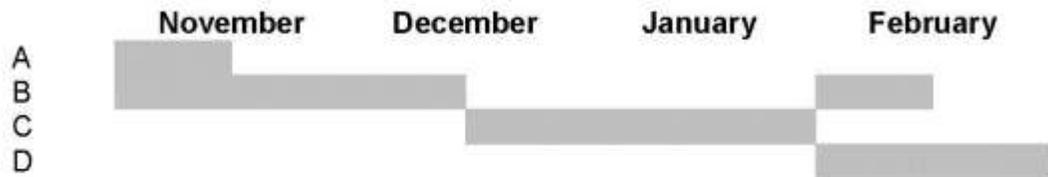
Additionally, identification of and the involvement of key stakeholders for data gathering efforts may be crucial to the success of economic development plan. The stakeholder interviews will be conducted by the Rural Planning Center, using a customized questionnaire.

Also, a public meeting can be held to gather feedback on the Town's identified issues and the results of the other public input efforts.

Partners

Washington County has worked with the North Carolina Economic Development Partnership, Albemarle Commission, NC East Alliance, and nearby counties. These partners will be crucial in the development of a successful economic development plan.

Proposed Schedule (all dates are 2016 - 2017)



- A. Preliminary
- B. Information Economic Opportunities
- C. Action Planning
- D. Strategy and Implementation

Proposed Budget (total project)

	Hours	Cost
Mileage (5 trips)	-	\$ 221
Meals		187
Copies (300 copies)	-	30
Flip Charts (1)	-	50
Facilitation	30	0
Survey Development	30	0
Analysis & Preparation	50	0
<i>Total</i>	110	\$488

The Rural Planning Center suggests that stakeholder engagement (if applicable) take place on same days (ex. meet with stakeholders during day, Steering Committee in the evening) to reduce travel costs and total project hours.

Attached is a detailed explanation of the various steps involved in the project and a Memorandum of Understanding for your consideration.

Process

<i>Economic Development Plan</i>	<i>County</i>
Activities	
Preliminary	
1. Review Existing Documents, Land Use Plans, Zoning Ordinances, Downtown/Development Codes, Former Development Plans	✓
2. Execute Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with client community adopt Board resolution	✓
3. Establish Local "Work Team" and/or Steering Committee	✓
Information Economic Opportunities	
4. Data Collection & Analysis	
5. Identify Community Assets & Economic Drivers	✓
6. Identify Stakeholders	✓
7. Public Input Interviews & Surveys	✓
8. SWOT Analysis	✓
9. Market Analysis	✓
Action Planning	
10. Define Economic Position / Vision (held 1 month after 2 nd Visit)	✓
11. Define & Determine Economic Development Strategies and Actions	✓
Activities	
12. Determine Organizational Structure if applicable	✓
13. Mission/Role of Organization if applicable	✓
Strategy and Implementation	
14. Implementation Plan with Performance Measures	✓
15. Identify Partners	✓
16. Budgeting	✓
17. Communication Planning	✓
18. Annual Review & Statistics	✓
19. Update Plan	✓

Number of Meetings (approximate)	5
Final Products	
A. Community Profile	✓
B. Retail Market Snapshot	✓
C. Asset Map	✓
D. Economic Strategy and Implementation Plan	✓

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
NC Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division
Rural Planning Center
Eastern Regional Office (ERO)
September 6, 2016

- 1) As part of Washington County's request for services to be provided by the Rural Planning Center, below you will find several conditions pertaining to these services. Please sign below to signify your agreement.
- 2) As part of the NC Department of Commerce, the state's lead agency for promoting economic development and prosperity, the Rural Planning Center ("Program") provides services and assistance that add value to community economic development efforts. In this context, clients are required to provide data which demonstrates the economic impact of the services provided within one (1) year of project completion.
- 3) As part of the Program's mission to add value to community economic development efforts, the Program may share successful "best practices" with other communities when appropriate. In this context, all materials produced from this project and economic outcomes may be shared with other communities as needed.
- 4) For assistance with development of an *Economic Development Plan*, Washington County will be responsible for paying the costs of travel, supplies, subsistence, etc., related directly to the project. Clients are billed for such expenses quarterly, and payment is generally due within 30 days following receipt of the invoice. For travel billing, the Rural Planning Center uses the Internal Revenue Service business standard mileage rate, which is currently 54 cents or \$0.54 per mile, but is subject to revision consistent with official Department of Commerce travel reimbursement policies.
- 5) The Rural Planning Center currently has staff with various skills sets in economic and community development planning and is responsible for delivering services throughout the state. When the Rural Planning Center accepts a project, its goal is to complete the project in a timely and responsible manner. In the event of staff turnover, budget reductions, or other unforeseeable events, however, we may be compelled to place a project in an indefinite "hold" status until replacement staff and/or other resources can be secured. In rare cases, where very specialized staff skills are unable to be replaced, the project commitment may be terminated. Projects may also be re-prioritized consistent with departmental or division policies.

[Signature of Chief Elected Official or Officer] _____

[Title] _____

[Date] _____

Commissioner Manning asked if the County went with Mr. Padrick on this, would this plan help with the County in getting in someone our Commerce Building. Mr. Padrick said his group would help the County get the tools the County needs in developing the County's vision.

Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Padrick if he is able to help the County with access to funds. Mr. Padrick said he didn't come with a checkbook, but with the assistance of the Dept. of Commerce, the County could get in touch with the folks who distribute those funds.

Commissioner Walker asked with what the County has, what would he help the County with. Mr. Padrick said he would be able to assist the County with a Marketing Plan which the County currently does not have.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to add this Economic Development Plan to the County's strategic plan. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously. Mr. Padrick did ask for the Board to name a group that he can work with. Mr. Potter suggested the Business Cluster.

UPDATE OF MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (BOC) AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE): Chair Phelps, Vice Chair Walker and Mr. Carawan, County Manager met with Board of Education Chair Gill, Vice Chair Riddick and Dr. Jackson, Washington County Schools Superintendent on August 25, 2016.

Chair Phelps said they discussed School Articles 40 & 42 Sales Tax Distribution which had not been distributed in the past few years. Chair Phelps spoke of the Technology Initiative the BOE presented which consists of buying Chromebooks for middle school students and staff. That cost would be \$216,958 total.

Mr. Carawan stated that it looked like there is \$384,000 from 2008 – 2015 Sales Tax Distribution that could be used but he needs to verify this with the auditor. Also there is \$130,000 from 2016 that could be used; however, Mr. Carawan needs to verify this with the auditor also.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the money could be used for technology or only for capital needs. Mr. Potter said it could be used for technology.

Dr. Jackson said it has been realized that there is a technology deficit in the middle school. The state is going in the direction of digital teaching and Washington County students need to be able to have the tools to work with. There will be a cart in every classroom for each notebook—the notebooks will not be transported home. Commissioner Manning asked how long before these Chromebooks become outdated. Dr. Jackson said it is the information on the internet that will be updated instead of the notebooks.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to appropriate \$216,958 from Articles 40 & 42 for implementing Washington County School's Technology Initiative. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion ensued regarding the Pines Elementary School roof. Dr. Jackson asked Ms. Cantrell to assist her with this part of the meeting. Dr. Jackson said that two numbers have been given regarding the cost of the air handlers—one of \$50,000 and \$110,000. Ms. Cantrell said the

\$50,000 was for the controls for the HVAC. The \$110,000 is for the fans themselves that are attached to the air handlers. Mr. Carawan stated during the walkthrough when Commissioner Sexton asked how many air handlers were there, he was told 6—5 weren't working. Commissioner Sexton asked about the cost to fix them. Ms. Cantrell said the last quote was for \$6,000 each. Ms. Cantrell said that there has to be a fan for each air handler and there are 11 of them at \$10,000 each.

Commissioner Sexton asked what the school system is asking for. Dr. Jackson said the Board has been given many options in past meetings and she feels things are stagnant right now. Dr. Jackson said the Boards discussed the air handlers and fans in May and nothing has been done and the schools condition has not changed.

Commissioner Sexton is still in agreement for getting the air handlers working and feels that would help the problem and thinks they need to get those working to see which direction to go after that. He said he is baffled why the current air handlers have been disconnected and never reconnected. Dr. Jackson said there is also the structural issue of the roof. This is a two-fold issue.

BOE Chair Gill thought that at the 2 on 2 meeting it was decided to replace the roof. Chair Phelps told BOE Chair Gill said that we haven't gotten to that part of the agenda.

Commissioner Sexton said the day that the Board went on the tour he did not see any rust or where any leaks were. He hasn't seen the evidence.

Commissioner Walker asked how many classrooms were affected from the storm this weekend. Dr. Jackson said 3 or 4 classrooms and in the hallways.

Dr. Jackson handed out copies of the roof evaluation that was previously done in April of 2015.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to appropriate \$160,000 to fix the 11 air handlers and the controls. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Chair Phelps said the roof replacement was also discussed in the recent joint meeting. Commissioner Johnson asked where the funds for the roof would come from. Mr. Carawan said that Dr. Jackson understands that the BOE has to do a RFQ and an engineering study and bidders and then she will need to turn over the documents to him to find funding. BOE member Jerry Phelps suggested having the firm that did the roof evaluation come and talk to the Board and take the tour of Pines Elementary School with the Commissioners. Commissioner Sexton said he wants someone to show him what the problem is before he makes a decision. Mr. Riddick asked who is going to pay the next \$18,000 for the engineer to come back. Mr. Riddick said the BOE has submitted the report to the Board and said that reports have been submitted since 2008. Commissioner Walker said he remembers some of the problems when he was Superintendent, but was told when Supt. Farelley came onboard that all the problems were fixed.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to move ahead with putting a roof on Pines Elementary School. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Manning said he hasn't heard anything about the chiller. Is it not going to be needed anymore? Ms. Cantrell said it would be needed once the air handlers are fixed.

Commissioner Sexton asked Dr. Jackson if a new roof is put on Pines Elementary School, will they look into consolidating the schools. There was no reply.

Mr. Carawan asked for clarification: is the school board going to start on the RFQ, design, solicitation, bidding for the roof system. Dr. Jackson said yes.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT: Ms. Dixon went over the budget transfers and budget amendments and her report that was in the Commissioners' package.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve budget amendments BA #2016-049, BA #2016-50 and budget transfers BT #2016-032, BT #2016-033, BT #2016-034, BT #2016-035 and BT #2016-036 for 2015-2016. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the budget amendments BA #2017-003, BA #2017-004, BA #2017-005, BA #2017-006, BA #2017-007, BA #2017-008 and budget transfers BT #2017-003, BT #2017-004, BT #2017-005 and BT#2017-006 for 2016-2017. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Chair Phelps asked why was this lottery money in a budget amendment. Mr. Carawan said it was approved at the June 6 meeting late in the budget process.

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

Commissioner Sexton said the Governor was here on Sunday looking at damage from Hurricane Hermine. He rode through Washington County to look at some land damage in Tyrrell County. He did say he would look into the Lake Phelps issue.

Chair Phelps said the Commissioners will have another meeting on September 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners' Room.

Ms. Bennett mentioned the celebration of the unified court system being held in Washington County Courthouse on Friday, September 23 from 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM.

Mr. Carawan said the County had a request from Plymouth for water and Roper may want to join us on a regular basis. Mr. Carawan will be talking with each town's mayor.

Mr. Potter said the beaver contracts are in place. Mr. Potter also said he is in talks with a school advisor on getting interns to help on a voluntary basis in some of the County offices.

Commissioner Manning made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143.318.11(a)(6) personnel. Commissioner Sexton seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Back in Open Session, **Commissioner Johnson made a motion to authorize the Board Chair to sign the contract with Roanoke Development Center. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Manning made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143.318.11(a)(3) attorney-client privilege. Commissioner Sexton seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Back in Open Session, Commissioner Manning made a motion to approve the transfer of the back portion of the Strader property which currently has an easement on it in favor of the Town of Plymouth to the Town of Plymouth and for the Board Chair to execute that deed subject to easements to be reserved in favor of the County including a right of reverter clause. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143.318.11(a)(4) economic development. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

At 10:00 PM, with no further business to discuss, **Commissioner Sexton made a motion to recess the meeting to September 19 at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners' Room. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

D. Cole Phelps
Chair

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