

PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
JANUARY 12, 2015

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, January 12, 2015 in Courtroom C in the Pasquotank County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Chairman
Jeff Dixon
Lloyd E. Griffin, III
Dr. William R. Sterritt
Frankie Meads
Bettie J. Parker

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Cecil Perry, Vice-Chairman

OTHERS PRESENT:

Rodney Bunch, County Manager
R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
Karen Jennings, Clerk to the Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Joe Winslow. Commissioner Lloyd Griffin gave the invocation and Commissioner William Sterritt led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Chairman Winslow asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Commissioner Jeff Dixon requested that the agenda be amended to add the following recommendations from the Finance Committee to the consent agenda: 1) Approval of 2013-14 financial report as presented today by Greg Adams with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A.; and 2) Approval of donation of confiscated Snap-On Tools truck to the Elizabeth City Fire Department.

Motion was made by Jeff Dixon, seconded by Lloyd Griffin to add the two items recommended by the Finance Committee to the consent agenda.

Discussion followed and Commissioner Frankie Meads asked that donation of the truck not be considered under the consent agenda, but be considered separately.

The motion was amended to remove from the consent agenda and add to new business the donation of the confiscated Snap-On Tools truck to the Elizabeth City Fire Department. The amended motion carried.

2. COMMENTS FROM EARL ROUNTREE:

Chairman Winslow called on Mr. Earl Rountree from Gates County to address the Board. Mr. Rountree said he is finally retiring from politics after 60 years. He said anything that ties Gates County to Pasquotank County is of interest to him. He said that is why he was very interested in the hospital project. He stated that the hospital seems to be doing well and he does not think the Board has anything to worry about regarding its decision. He said another thing that Gates County is tied to is College of The Albemarle. He said he would like to see Gates County come up with a little more money for COA and he has made some inroads. He noted that Gates County has a lot of problems, but he will keep lobbying for Gates County to contribute more to COA.

3. PRESENTATION OF PINS TO EMPLOYEES FOR YEARS OF SERVICE:

Chairman Winslow called on the following county employees to receive pins in recognition of their years of service to Pasquotank County.

Employee	Department	Years of Service
Gwen Nixon	Tax Department	20 years
Randy Cartwright	Sheriff's Department	20 years
Deidre Moore	Social Services Department	10 years

Chairman Winslow congratulated and thanked the employees for their service to Pasquotank County.

4. PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED FARM AND FOREST PROTECTION PLAN:

Dr. Travis Burke, Interim Extension Director, explained that in 2008 the Board approved the Voluntary Agriculture District Program in Pasquotank County. He stated that Ms. Lawrence will be talking to the Board tonight about a Farm and Forest Protection Plan for Pasquotank County. He introduced Grace Lawrence, Farm and Forest Protection Project Coordinator with the University of Mount Olive.

Ms. Lawrence explained that she is here tonight to explain what a Farm and Forest Plan is all about. She said a Farm and Forest Plan describes the current situation of agriculture and determines what can be done to maintain a viable aspect of the county. She stated that this plan would come at no cost to the county because Mount Olive College's Agribusiness Center was awarded a grant from the North Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (ADFP). She said they have applied for a grant to write plans for three counties: Chowan, Pasquotank and Perquimans. The grant is administered by the Department of Agriculture and the components of the plan are set out by law. These include: an inventory of agricultural resources; look at the challenges and opportunities for family farms and forests to remain in operation; maintain a list of existing and potential farmland protection tools; and recommendations for an action plan and timeline to keep a viable economic engine in the county going. Ms. Lawrence explained that the benefits of the plan are that it identifies what the needs are in the agricultural and forestry community. It also lays out spatially on a map where agriculture is in the county, and it can be used as a component of the Land Use Plan. With a certified plan the county would get priority for funding from agencies awarding agricultural grants and there will be a reduced matching funds requirement. Ms. Lawrence said for future Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation grants for a tier one county like Pasquotank with a farmland protection plan there would be a 0% match--without a farmland protection plan there would be a 30% match. She advised that there are 51 plans statewide that have been approved or are in the process of being approved. She said the Agribusiness Center has completed about 20 of these plans and they feel they have the expertise and skills to be able to write successful plans.

Ms. Lawrence explained that the process is pretty straightforward and involves development of a county team comprised of leaders in agriculture, forestry, agribusinesses, county agencies, and local leaders. The role of the team is to provide access for survey distribution and interviews; provide information or contacts to obtain information, such as the tax office, GIS, and planning; review drafts of the plan to ensure it is what the county needs; work with them to present the plan to the Board of Commissioners for endorsement; and support implementation of the plan. The target audiences for the surveys and interviews are farm and forest landowners, agribusiness owners, and the general public. The surveys are distributed via the internet, can be handed out at trainings and workshops, and interviews will be conducted face to face or by telephone. The team will work with them and verify the plan and the Board of Commissioners will be asked to adopt the plan. Once adopted, the plan will be sent to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture for certification. When it is certified, the county can then reap the benefits which have previously been listed. Ms. Lawrence said the Department of Agriculture would like to see this as a living document that is updated and adapted periodically to reflect the changes that occur in the county. She noted that the plan is a recommendation only and does not get into regulation. She stated that the grant deadline is June 30, 2016.

Dr. Burke said this plan would give the counties that adopt it opportunity for more resources so that the North Carolina Department of Agriculture would know that the county is vested in the agricultural community. He stated that he would recommend development of the plan.

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Bettie Parker to support the development of the proposed Farm and Forest Protection Plan. The motion carried.

5. PRESENTATION OF ALBEMARLE COMMISSION STEWARDSHIP REPORT:

Chairman Winslow recognized Cathy Davison, Executive Director of Albemarle Commission. Ms. Davison stated that she would like to provide information on the Albemarle Commission which has been around since 1971. She advised that the mission of the Commission is to improve the ability of its member governments to enhance the quality of the lives of the citizens in the Albemarle Region through direct service, grant-writing, planning & assessment, and program development & management as a multi-agency public-private partnership. She said currently the Albemarle Commission offers a multitude of programs including: Area Agency on

Aging; Senior Nutrition; Rural Planning Organization; Workforce Development; Economic Development; and the Revolving Loan Fund which is backed by the Economic Development Administration. She explained that over the past year the Commission has also had a CDBG grant fund of \$150,000 that has supported single family rehab. She stated that year to date \$42,817 has been spent on single family rehab in Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County. She detailed the various programs and provided some statistics showing Pasquotank County's return on its investments in the Albemarle Commission. She stated that Pasquotank County pays the Albemarle Commission just under \$125,000 annually for all of these services. She noted that out of the ten counties served by Albemarle Commission, Pasquotank County has the largest population and also has the greatest opportunity to provide services to increase the quality of life for its residents and businesses.

Ms. Davison noted that Albemarle Commission has 23 staff members spread over all of its programs and has an overall budget of \$6.5 million. The general portion of its budget comes from county members and grants are received for the other portions of its budget.

The Board thanked Ms. Davison for her report.

6. PRESENTATION ON AREA AGENCY ON AGING AND NUTRITION PROGRAM:

Chairman Winslow recognized Laura Alvarico, Director of the Area Agency on Aging, to present a report on the Aging Program and the Nutrition Program administered by the Albemarle Commission.

Ms. Alvarico stated that she will focus on the Nutrition Program which offers congregate and home-delivered meals throughout the ten counties. She noted that the program is better known as the Meals on Wheels Program. She explained that they contract with a licensed dietician and their meals have to meet the one-third RDA requirements and state and federal guidelines. She said they use local caterers to provide the meals and all of their clients get hot meals every day, with the exception of their clients who are not on a local route to whom they provide frozen meals. She stated that they provide meals to 750 to 800 clients per day ranging from 12,000 to 13,000 meals per month around the region. She said more than half of the meals are provided to clients who are declared homebound by their doctors and who are not able to get to the congregate sites. The meals are delivered by their network of over 900 volunteers who give generously of their time and resources to provide those meals. Ms. Alvarico stated that there are two congregate sites, one at Virginia Dare and one at Harriot Heights. She said for their home-delivered meal clients they go above and beyond to provide more than a meal. She said they have a blanket program to provide blankets to clients who may have heating inadequacies in their homes, and in the summertime they have a fan program which is funded by a grant from Dominion Power. She stated that they have shelf stable and emergency meals for holidays when the program may be closed for an extended period of time or in the event of a hurricane. She advised that they also have a pet food program because they found that some of their clients were sharing their meals with their pets and could not afford pet food otherwise. She said the home-delivered meal program is more than a meal in the sense that someone is checking on those clients every day. She noted that many times these clients do not see anyone besides the volunteers who deliver their meals. She said there have been many cases where a volunteer has been able to call for help because someone has had a stroke and could not call for help themselves. She advised that in March they will have a March for Meals Campaign during which officials will be invited to help deliver meals and meet some of the clients being served through the programs and give them an opportunity to express their appreciation for the county's support.

Ms. Alvarico reported that the Area Agency on Aging also administers several programs including: the ombudsman program which advocates for the residents living in long-term care facilities; a caregiver support program which works with family caregivers who are trying to keep their loved ones at home and out of an institutional setting as long as possible; and the Albemarle Senior Games. She stated that she received a report from the North Carolina Data Center with population projections for older adults. In Pasquotank County the population of older adults 60 years of age and older is projected to increase by 29.2% from 2013 and 2033; age 65 and older by 40.8%; and age 85 and older by 32%. Ms. Alvarico noted that this will obviously mean a lot more demand for the services they provide and the services that the Department of Social Services provides.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin asked how many meals are served at the congregate sites and how many are delivered to the homebound in Pasquotank County. Ms. Alvarico responded that for 2014 a total of 11,132 home-delivered meals were served, and 11,644 meals were served at the congregate sites. Commissioner Griffin, who serves on the Albemarle Commission Board, added that the meals are currently catered by Canteen Services in Currituck County and the caterer is selected through a competitive bid process. He noted that Pasquotank County contributes about \$65,000 to that program and there is currently a waiting list for the northern and southern portions of Pasquotank County.

Chairman Winslow thanked Ms. Alvarico for the information she provided.

7. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes of December 15, 2014 Commissioner Meeting

b. Approval of Tax Releases & Refunds and Solid Waste Fee Releases

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the following tax releases & refunds and solid waste fee releases:

Releases:

	County	City
1. Carolina Dunes Inc.	1,504.04	

Refunds:

1. Sightpath Medical Inc. NC-15	318.30	250.09
2. Sightpath Medical Inc. NC-15	657.24	516.41

Solid Waste Releases:

Owner's Name	Parcel ID Number	Reason for Release
Linda Bridgman Etal	P6-26	Vacant since 2003
Melba Bridgman	P7-16	Vacant since 2003
Cash's MHP, LLC	P139-43-3	Vacant since 2010
Raymond Godfrey	P34-9	Vacant 10+ years
Isaiah F. Jackson	P15-8	Vacant 20+ years

c. Approval of FY 2013-14 Financial Report

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the county's FY 2013-14 financial report as presented at the Finance Committee meeting today by Greg Adams with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A.

Motion was made by Jeff Dixon, seconded by Lloyd Griffin to approve the consent agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

8. APPROVAL TO DONATE TRUCK TO THE ELIZABETH CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT:

The Board considered a recommendation from the Finance Committee to donate a former Snap-On Tools truck that had been confiscated by the Sheriff's Department 10+/- years ago to the Elizabeth City Fire Department. The fire department plans to utilize the vehicle as a specialized emergency response vehicle for high angle rescue, trench rescue, grain bin rescue, confined space rescue, and other similar emergency incidents.

Commissioner Griffin noted that he understands the fire department may possibly donate a trailer to the Sheriff's Department in return for the truck.

Motion was made by Jeff Dixon, seconded by Lloyd Griffin to donate the former Snap-On Tools truck to the Elizabeth City Fire Department, but to first have an appraisal done in order to determine the value of the vehicle that will be donated to the fire department. The motion carried by a five to one margin Commissioner Commissioner Meads voting against the motion.

9. **REPORT FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER:**

County Manager Rodney Bunch reported that bid packages were sent out today by Hyman & Robey to prospective bidders for a project to relocate a sewer manhole in the Commerce Park. This relocation will allow for extension of sewer for future business expansion.

Mr. Bunch reported that the Harrell House behind the Courthouse is scheduled to be burned by the Elizabeth City Fire Department on January 24th.

Mr. Bunch stated that the County Commissioner Handbook has been updated and copies of the updated book have been provided to each Commissioner.

Mr. Bunch advised that the Emergency Management Coordinator has been working with Camden County on a memorandum of understanding with Camden United Methodist Church as a dispensing site for food and supplies in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. He said this is a service that the Emergency Management Department will coordinate and provide for Camden County and there will be no cost to Pasquotank County.

10. **REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner William Sterritt reported that he attended his first Elizabeth City Downtown meeting as a member of the Board of Directors followed by orientation a few days later. He said he would hate to think what the downtown would be like if this committee were not in place. He added that Elizabeth City Downtown does an outstanding job. Commissioner Sterritt stated that the Social Services Board will meet tomorrow morning. He said he has to be sworn in as a new member, but will be unable to attend tomorrow's meeting and other arrangements will be made for him to be sworn in. Commissioner Sterritt reported that the Recreation Advisory Committee met last week and there is nothing new to report at this time. Commissioner Sterritt stated that he attended a meeting of the Community Relations Commission today and the Commission is very happy to be included with the County Commissioners in the proposed Hugh Cale event.

Commissioner Frankie Meads reported that the SPCA has changed the time of its meetings to 5:00 PM. He said the group is doing well.

Commissioner Jeff Dixon asked if staff plans to follow up on a letter from Kenneth Buchanan requesting that the county place port-o-johns at the county's boat ramps. He stated that he believes the county does not have the funds for something of this sort as it would most likely require a grant. He added that he is not particularly fond of placing port-o-johns at the boat ramps.

Commissioner Bettie Parker reported that the Library Board of Trustees will meet tomorrow at 5:30 PM and she plans to attend the meeting. She stated that over the last couple of weeks she has toured the Public Safety Building and the EMS Building and has learned a lot. She said she hopes to be able to attend the landfill tour next Wednesday. She added that over the holidays she rang the bell for the Salvation Army at Wal-Mart and was able to see a lot of people.

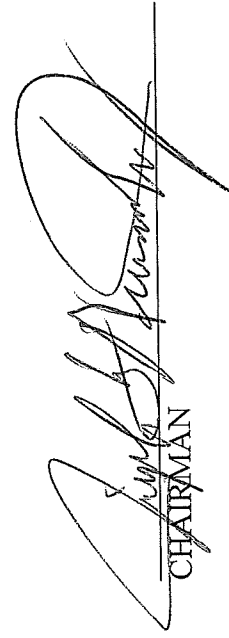
Commissioner Lloyd Griffin stated that he would like to thank staff, Chairman Winslow and Commissioner Dixon for taking time over the last two weeks to attend numerous lengthy meetings to take care of county business.

Commissioner Frankie Meads stated that after the meeting with the Camden County Board of Commissioners last week in regard to the EMS contract he understood that it is a matter of whether or not Camden can afford the service. He said that Pasquotank only wants what it costs to provide the service to Camden.

Chairman Winslow stated that the jail is doing okay and has about the same number of federal prisoners at 33 or 34. The current jail budget was based on 35 federal prisoners.

There being no further business;

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Frankie Meads to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.



FRANKIE MEADS
CHAIRMAN



KAREN JENNINGS
CLERK TO THE BOARD