

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
APRIL 1, 2013**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, April 1, 2013 in Courtroom C in the Pasquotank County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeff Dixon, Chairman
Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Lloyd E. Griffin, III
Cecil Perry
Dr. William R. Sterritt
Gary G. White
Frankie Meads

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman Jeff Dixon. Commissioner Lloyd Griffin gave the invocation and Chairman Dixon led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

1. COMMENTS FROM DOUG LANE:

Chairman Dixon called on Mr. Doug Lane to address the Board. Mr. Lane explained that about a month ago he asked the Board to endorse a letter that he had drafted to the North Carolina Wildlife Commission and he asked the status of that letter. Chairman Dixon responded that he had spoken with Representative Steinburg to discuss this matter and he advised that it was too late this session to introduce a bill. Mr. Lane explained that he only requested that a letter be sent giving him backing from the Board to talk to the Wildlife Commission. He said the letter would simply be advising the Wildlife Commission that there is an issue that needs to be addressed, so it is not time related. Chairman Dixon stated that he would take another look at the letter.

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

Chairman Dixon called on the following county employees to receive pins recognizing their years of service to Pasquotank County.

Employee	Department	Years of Service
Donnie Byrd	Water Department	10 years
Wesley Jordan	Sheriff's Department	10 years
Tonya Ferebee	Social Services Department	10 years
Edward Ownley	Solid Waste Department	10 years

Those employees who could not be here tonight include Kathy Eason with 15 years of service and Dale Corbin with 10 years of service.

3. PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION FOR FAIR HOUSING MONTH:

Chairman Dixon recognized Erica Ramjohn, Housing Counselor with River City Community Development Corporation, to accept a proclamation for Fair Housing Month. He read the proclamation as follows and then presented it to Ms. Ramjohn:

**PROCLAMATION
FAIR HOUSING MONTH
APRIL 2013**

WHEREAS, April 2013 marks the 45th Anniversary of the Federal Housing Act of 1968 and the 30th Anniversary of the North Carolina Fair Housing Act. Both laws prohibit discrimination in housing because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, handicap and familial status; and

WHEREAS, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners, Albemarle Area Association of Realtors, the City of Elizabeth City Community Development Program, Elizabeth City State University Community Development Program, NC Cooperative Extension Service - Pasquotank Center, Northeastern Community Development Corporation, River City Community Development Corporation and county and local governments, concerned citizens and the housing industry, are working to make fair housing opportunities possible for all our citizens. Through their efforts, they are encouraging others to abide by the letter and the spirit of the fair housing laws; and

WHEREAS, one of the most important concerns of Pasquotank County citizens is the availability of housing to them as individuals and families. By supporting and promoting fair housing and equal opportunity, we are contributing to the health of our County and our State;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims April 2013 as "Fair Housing Month" in Pasquotank County and urges our citizens to rededicate themselves to ensuring that fair housing laws are always upheld and citizens are protected against discrimination.

PRESENTED this 1st day of April, 2013.

Ms. Ramjohn thanked the Board for proclaiming Fair Housing Month. She said during the month of April River City CDC will be conducting workshops at the Library and at River City CDC to educate the public on fair housing and other housing related programs. Accompanying Ms. Ramjohn was Yokesha Rhem, also a Housing Counselor with River City CDC.

4. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Chairman Dixon asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. It was requested that the agenda be amended to add the following items to the consent agenda: 1) Approval of recommendation from the Finance Committee to allow the fireworks display for the Potato Festival with no funding, and the 4th of July fireworks display with \$5,000 in funding; 2) Approval of reimbursement to the city for the county's share of the cost of a bi-directional antenna system for Albemarle Hospital; 3) Acceptance of bid of \$200 for two land-locked parcels of surplus property off of Lover's Lane on the condition that the county provides a non-warranty deed. The County Manager stated that a Resolution Supporting the Development of Alternative Energy Projects in Northeastern North Carolina also needs to be added to the consent agenda.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin requested that Item #1 and the resolution regarding alternative energy be removed from the consent agenda. He noted that he will need to be recused from considering Item #1.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Gary White to amend the agenda to add items #2 and #3 above to the Consent Agenda and to add Item #1 and the resolution regarding alternative energy projects to New Business. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Dixon requested that a Closed Session be added at the end of the meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Joe Winslow to add a Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter at the end of the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes of March 18, 20 and 21, 2013 Commissioner Meetings
- b. Approval of Tax Releases and Refunds
- The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the following tax releases, refunds and solid waste fee releases and refunds:

Releases:	County	City
1. Cody Alan Johnson.	119.04	
2. Amy Thomas Midgett	130.63	109.30
3. Paul Gerard Mills	157.48	123.11
4. Michael Todd Evans	122.33	
5. Matthew Angelo Schibler	125.55	

Refunds:

1. Linwood Williams	155.63
2. Linwood Williams	159.45
3. Linwood Williams	159.45

Solid Waste Releases:

Owner's Name	Parcel ID Number	Reason for Release
James Howard & Billie R. Winslow	P57-5F	House vacant

- c. Approval of Reimbursement to the City for the County's Share of the Cost of a Bi-Directional Antenna System for Albemarle Hospital

The Finance Committee has recommended that the Board pay its share of the cost of a bi-directional antenna system for Albemarle Hospital from the current year's budget. The county's share of the cost is approximately \$38,000. A budget amendment will be needed in the amount of \$38,000 to pay for the antenna system.

- d. Approval of Bid for Surplus Property

The Finance Committee has recommended that the Board accept a bid in the amount of \$200 for two land-locked parcels of property off of Lover's Lane, conditioned on the county providing the purchasers with a non-warranty deed. The bid had been advertised for upset bids, however no additional bids were received during the ten-day upset bid period.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Joe Winslow to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

The following tax releases have been approved by the Finance Officer:

Releases:	County	City
1. John Wayne Bundy	32.98	
2. Nancy Lee Brannon	52.17	
3. Jayesh Janakrai Kinariwal	21.57	17.22
4. Paris Edward Sessoms	24.18	19.30
5. Eric Jamahl Carey	18.60	
6. Robert Allen Roane	39.30	
7. Philip Eugene Dobrosky, Jr.	17.42	
8. William Joseph Mercer	29.29	
9. Bradley James Perkins	4.46	
10. Clarence Lee Beasley	1.33	1.06
11. Izell Jackson	15.00	11.25
12. Alafaye Sturdivant McNurrin	7.06	5.64
13. Harry Beard Cannon III	8.64	6.90
14. Darin Dale Hooser	62.87	
15. Jack Nelson Shrader	7.50	10.99
16. Graham William Brown	62.68	55.04

17.	Stephen Ryan Gonzalez	45.82	41.58
18.	Tama Kathryn Glover	68.20	59.45
19.	Rita Bocade Leblanc	68.82	59.95
20.	Dennis Lee Dance	9.98	
21.	Irron Demetrick Ervin	41.29	
22.	Demetre Wesley Ishman	27.52	20.64
23.	Sean Patrick Priest	51.21	
24.	Janet Lynn Gurganus	13.76	
25.	Jeffrey Ray Hollingsworth	44.83	
26.	Jennifer Waitt	16.74	13.36
27.	Linda Duntten Brumsey	15.68	11.76
28.	Jeremy Wood Green	35.71	
29.	Michael Bryan Anderson	20.27	
30.	Richard T. Raymond, Jr.	30.94	
31.	Richard Tilton Raymond, Jr.	44.89	
32.	Louis Carl Hooper	8.93	
33.	Jack Henry Fortenberry	89.59	
34.	Karen Jean Wright	79.39	63.38
35.	Anylynn Wisniecuski-Monville	87.67	74.99
36.	Artie Sherwood Sellers	17.42	18.07
37.	Mohammad Masod Hasan	6.94	5.54
38.	John Ronald Walton	93.37	79.55
39.	John Ronald Walton	43.59	39.80

6. **APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO ALLOW MULTI-STATE FOREIGN TRADE ZONE PARTNERSHIPS IN NORTH CAROLINA:**

Economic Developer Wayne Harris explained that this resolution is being requested to support an effort by Representative Steinburg. He stated that the Northeast Commission for the past three or four years has gone to great lengths to make Raleigh understand that the economic future of Eastern North Carolina is tied very closely to the Port of Virginia. He stated that they were gaining some traction and with the change in administration they wanted to continue that momentum. He said a few weeks ago Chairman Dixon, Mayor Peel, Assistant County Manager Rodney Bunch, and he met with Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker and this was one of their major points. Mr. Harris said this resolution would support an effort by Representative Steinburg to amend the current law allowing foreign trade zones so that they could be formed across borders and include other states. He stated that it allows companies who utilize foreign trade to receive foreign components duty-free, provided they assemble those components in the United States. He said if these companies re-export, it allows them to export duty-free. Mr. Harris noted that there are not currently any local companies who would receive much benefit from these partnerships, but with the eventual deployment of offshore wind this will increasingly be an attractive feature for companies who are in the wind supply chain and any other company that manufactures or assembles a product that has some foreign components. Mr. Harris asked the Board to favorably consider this resolution as a way to show support for the effort in Raleigh.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by William Sterritt to adopt the following Resolution to Allow Multi-State Foreign Trade Zone Partnerships in North Carolina. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION TO ALLOW MULTI-STATE FOREIGN TRADE ZONE PARTNERSHIPS IN NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Pasquotank County Commerce Park lies just 35 miles from the Port of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Pasquotank County also is connected to the Port by rail and barge; and

WHEREAS, the deployment of offshore wind turbines in the Mid-Atlantic and soon-to-be completed improvements to the Panama Canal offer unprecedented opportunities for growth in trade and manufacturing for the Port and its surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a Foreign Trade Zone would offer substantial cost advantages to existing manufacturers and those considering relocating to or expanding in Pasquotank County; and

WHEREAS, the proximity of Pasquotank County to the Port of Virginia would make it a natural partner in a Foreign Trade Zone; and

WHEREAS, such a partnership is currently permitted by United States law as well as by statute in the Commonwealth of Virginia, but not currently under North Carolina statute.

NOW THEREFORE, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners petitions the North Carolina General Assembly to amend North Carolina Statute §55C-2 to permit the formation of Public Corporation Partnerships and Foreign Trade Zone partnerships across state lines.

ADOPTED this the 1st day of April, 2013.

7. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION OPPOSING SENATE BILL 224 THAT WOULD PERMIT SUNDAY HUNTING:

Chairman Dixon stated that the agenda needs to be amended to add a Resolution Opposing Senate Bill 224.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Cecil Perry to amend the agenda to add a Resolution Opposing Senate Bill 224. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Dixon explained that the Wildlife Commission has been holding forums throughout the state about allowing hunting on Sundays and he believes they are moving forward with it. He stated that a lot of counties in Northeastern North Carolina are opposed to this bill and he has received resolutions from Currituck County and Dare County opposing the bill. He asked the Board to adopt a resolution opposing Senate Bill 224.

County Manager Randy Keaton asked if this resolution would be opposed to only hunting with firearms on Sundays because bow-hunting is allowed on Sundays. The Board agreed that the resolution should support no changes in the current law.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Gary White to adopt a Resolution Opposing Senate Bill 224 that would permit Sunday hunting. The motion carried unanimously and the following resolution was adopted.

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING NORTH CAROLINA SENATE BILL 224
THAT WOULD PERMIT SUNDAY HUNTING**

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute G.S. §103-2 currently prohibits hunting on Sundays with a shotgun, rifle or pistol, however this prohibition does not extend to bow hunting; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 224 of the 2013 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly would remove the current prohibition by permitting Sunday hunting on private lands; and

WHEREAS, a 2006 survey by Virginia Tech for a cost of \$143,000 commissioned by the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission released the following information: 65% of the general population opposes legalized hunting on Sunday and only 25% of the general population supports Sunday hunting; and

WHEREAS, there have been no studies that would determine the effect on the resources of adding another hunting day to the week; and

WHEREAS, Sunday hunting compromises the safe enjoyment of many outdoor recreational activities; and

WHEREAS, the current ban protects rural churches from disruptions that would be caused by Sunday hunting; and

WHEREAS, prohibiting hunting on Sunday serves as a lay day for the conservation of North Carolina's wildlife resources and their habitats; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners strongly opposes Senate Bill 224 that would allow hunting on Sundays on private land with the permission of the land owner, and requests that the North Carolina General Assembly keep G.S. §103-2 intact.

ADOPTED this 1st day of April, 2013.

8. APPROVAL OF REVISED RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

The Board considered the revised Rules of Procedure for the Board of Commissioners that included changes recommended at a recent work session. County Attorney Mike Cox suggested that the Board remove the section regarding appointments and have this as a separate policy.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Joe Winslow to approve the revised Rules of Procedure, but to remove the section regarding appointments and to adopt it as a standalone policy. The motion carried unanimously.

9. APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR THE 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS DISPLAY:

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin requested that he be recused from considering this matter due to a conflict of interest.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Joe Winslow to recuse Commissioner Lloyd Griffin from considering funding for the 4th of July Fireworks Display. The motion carried.

Chairman Dixon stated that the Finance Committee today recommended approval of funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the 4th of July Fireworks display from occupancy tax funds. He noted that the Finance Committee did not approve \$3,000 for a fireworks display for the Potato Festival.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Cecil Perry to allow fireworks displays for the Potato Festival and the 4th of July and to approve funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the 4th of July Fireworks display to come from occupancy tax funds, and to not approve funding for fireworks for the Potato Festival.

Commissioner Meads noted that the County Manager has assured that there are tourism funds available for the 4th of July fireworks display. Mr. Keaton added that there would still be about \$7,000 remaining in tourism funds even after paying for the fireworks and other items that are already budgeted.

Commissioner Sterritt stated that occupancy tax funding is to put heads and beds in Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County. He said he cannot see where this fireworks display will be doing anything for the economy and he will not be voting for it.

The motion carried 4-2.

10. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS IN NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA:

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin asked if alternative energy projects are good for the economy why the companies are not coming in building facilities, but are depending on tax dollars to provide them with incentives. He said when the wind turbines were first discussed in Pasquotank County, the project was supposed to be a \$900 million project. He said the county revisited its tax structure to make it affordable for this company to come in and construct the turbines which was a tax incentive for them. He also said the federal government was going to rebate \$300 million of the \$900 million back to the company. He noted the company still does not have a contract to provide the power and the county is holding up the incentives. Commissioner Griffin stated that these type companies need to not depend on the incentives to bring big projects forward.

Vice-Chairman Winslow said the county has come a long way on the wind energy project. He stated that it certainly is not feasible when it comes to cost and the only way they can do this is through incentives. He said the county has gone so far with this project and he supports the resolution.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by William Sterritt to adopt the following Resolution Supporting the Development of Alternative Energy Projects in Northeastern North Carolina.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS IN NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA**

WHEREAS, Northeast North Carolina enjoys abundant, consistent resources capable of providing clean, renewable energy to our residents; and

WHEREAS, these resources, coupled with vast stretches of undeveloped land in agricultural cultivation, has attracted national and international energy development firms seeking to invest, create jobs and generate energy in Northeast North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, alternative energy development has emerged as a highly competitive and attractive industry cluster for Northeast North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the proposed alternative energy projects in the region will bring a substantial investment to the local and regional economy in Northeast North Carolina, as evidenced by the following:

- Over \$1.3 Billion dollars in capital investments
- Over \$65 Million in local spending
- Significant property tax revenues to local governments
- 650 Construction Jobs
- 42 Permanent Jobs
- 378 turbines, generating 675 MW of power
- Energy produced will be able to power 675,000 homes

WHEREAS, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners recognizes the value and impact of the military installation locations in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners believes and recognizes the opportunities for a growing defense cluster in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners also believes that a dynamic alternative energy industry cluster, including onshore wind energy development, can coexist in North Carolina along with a thriving Defense Industry cluster and current military operations; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the Department of Defense created the Siting Clearinghouse in 2011 to evaluate the impact of energy projects on military operations and to identify potential mitigation options if impacts are identified; and

WHEREAS, through the Siting Clearinghouse process, the energy companies and military have formed special mitigation teams for each proposed project; these teams are committed to preserving the quality and breadth of military training and operations while working to accommodate nearby alternative energy development;

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners:

1. **DECLARES** alternative energy development to be an important source of clean energy Nationally; a major revenue provider Locally; and a significant job-creating industry for the State and Region; and,
2. **PROMOTES** the responsible development of renewable energy resources in Northeast North Carolina in partnership with Local, State and Federal agencies and following all applicable laws, while utilizing the current regulatory and application processes; and,

3. **ENCOURAGES** the strong, close cooperation of all local stakeholders and the Department of Defense Siting Clearinghouse in the alternative energy project development process to ensure project siting is feasible and potential conflicts are mitigated; and,
4. **REQUESTS** that all efforts be made by the Local, State and Federal officials to understand the value and support the co-existence of alternative energy projects with current land uses in North Carolina.

Discussion followed and Vice-Chairman Winslow stated that he feels wind energy is in its very initial stages and he believes only through incentives can this be accomplished. He said there is an opportunity for this to bring funding within the area and he supports it knowing that there are some negatives. He added that he supports any development of wind energy or solar energy in this area. He said someday this may play a part in lowering utility rates in the area.

Commissioner William Sterritt said the county spent a lot of time developing wind energy regulations and the Board held many lengthy meetings regarding the current wind energy project that is on hold. He said so far it has not worked out, but that does not mean it will not work out in the future. He stated that he will vote in favor of the motion to give this an opportunity to go forward.

Commissioner Frankie Meads said he would put the wind energy project in the same category as the CargoLifter project that was discussed about ten years ago. He stated that windmills have not proven to be efficient anywhere in the country. He said without grants and federal money they do not go up and they do not work. He noted that his son works in a shop that makes parts for windmills and they have been proven very expensive. He said the technology has not been perfected and the wind has to be blowing a certain speed before the windmill will work and if it blows too much, the windmill has to be stopped. He added that windmills in the northern part of the country are having real problems. Commissioner Meads stated that he will be voting against the motion.

Vice-Chairman Winslow noted that the reason the wind energy project did not work is because of the low cost of natural gas. He explained if the cost of natural gas increases, the wind energy project will have a better chance of competing with natural gas and other forms of energy, but currently it is not as profitable. He said this is in the initial stages of development and there must be incentives to develop technology. He noted that the technology gets closer every year.

Commissioner Griffin stated that he is not opposed to the technology and the cycle of renewable energy, but is opposed to the amount of incentives that had to be given for these facilities. He said North Carolina does not have a production wind farm, however they are all over the country. He noted that the companies would not be building wind farms if the technology were not there and they could not show a rate of return. He said the companies that build the wind turbines should bring their own investment capital.

Commissioner Perry stated that he agrees with Vice-Chairman Winslow that opportunities need to be given for any type of technology to become successful and it does not happen overnight. He said turbines and windmills will produce renewable energy and he believes they should be given an opportunity.

Commissioner Meads noted that windmills have been around for over 100 years and now the ones that were around in northern Europe are no longer used because the technology only allowed them to be used to pump water. He added if they had been so good, they would have been converted to electricity, but that has not been done.

Vice-Chairman Winslow stated that several years ago he flew into Sweden and learned that 60% of their total electricity is from wind turbines. In France that total is 80%. Mr. Winslow said there is increased development of wind energy and it is becoming more efficient.

Commissioner Gary White stated that over the past couple of years the Board has put a lot of time and effort into wind turbines. He said although he understands Commissioner Griffin's concerns, he has to consider the welfare of the county and its ability to generate revenue. He said he will be supporting the resolution.

The motion to adopt the Resolution Supporting the Development of Alternative Energy Projects carried by a five to two margin with Commissioners Griffin and Meads voting against the resolution.

11. REPORTS FROM COUNTY MANAGER:

County Manager Randy Keaton reported that the Nixonton fire truck that was listed on GovDeals sold for \$3,520. He said the county paid \$11,000 for the truck twenty-seven years ago when it purchased it from InterCounty Volunteer Fire Department.

Mr. Keaton stated that the health insurance pool is in the process of receiving proposals from the League of Municipalities and from several other private companies in an effort to try to lower employee health insurance costs. He said the proposals are due next week.

12. CALENDAR:

The Clerk reviewed the calendar of upcoming meetings and events.

Chairman Dixon stated that the Water Committee will be discussing several issues at its meeting this Wednesday that need to involve the entire Board. He asked if other members of the Board can be involved in the Water Committee meeting. The County Attorney responded that the other members could attend, but could not take part in discussions or deliberations. The Board agreed at the end of tonight's meeting to recess until Wednesday, April 3 at 2:00 PM in order for the entire Board to meet with the Water Committee.

13. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY:

County Attorney Mike Cox stated that the Finance Committee today discussed fireworks displays. He noted that a permission issue came up. He explained that the Board granted a continuing resolution last year for the city to issue permits for fireworks displays.

14. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

Commissioner Cecil Perry presented the following recommendations from the Appointments Committee:

Tourism Development Authority - Nominate Georgene Falcon to replace Toni McGovern who is no longer employed in the hotel/motel industry.

Chairman Dixon asked if there were any further nominations. There being none;

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Lloyd Griffin to nominate Georgene Falcon for appointment as a hotel/motel industry representative on the Tourism Development Authority. This appointment will be placed on the next agenda for final approval. The motion carried unanimously.

Albamarle Commission - Appoint Commissioner Gary White to replace Commissioner Lloyd Griffin.

Chairman Dixon asked if there were other nominations. There being none;

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Joe Winslow to appoint Commissioner Gary White to the Albamarle Commission Board to replace Commissioner Lloyd Griffin. The motion carried unanimously.

15. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner William Sterritt reported that the Governance Committee met last week and held a public forum at the Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church and he thought it went real well. He stated that he counted 50 people there. He said the majority of the people who spoke were in favor of the fact that the committee is gathering information in order to at some point present a recommendation to the Board. He advised that the next forum will be on April 24 at the Weeksville Lions Club. Commissioner Sterritt stated that the minutes of the committee are not summary minutes, but verbatim minutes. He said this helps people who could not be at a meeting to understand who said what and why. He stated that the day prior to the April 24 public forum at 4:00 PM the Governance Committee will be meeting in the Hugh Cale Commissioners Board Room to discuss what happened at the last meeting and give some insight about how the next forum should be conducted.

Commissioner Gary White reported that the Water Committee will be meeting Wednesday at 2:00 PM.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin stated that last week he attended a meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority. He said the director has left and they are waiting for a new person to fill in the gap as they work on their transportation plan. He stated that the chairman of the super regional RPO group was defeated in the last election so the group is reorganizing. He said they have done their best to let the middle coastal plain all the way to the South Carolina line know that there is a Northeast North Carolina that needs to be part of their master planning.

Commissioner Griffin asked Commissioner Sterritt if the Governance Committee discussed the 4-2-1 plan at the forum last week or discussed retaining the current board structure, or whether the committee only discussed the 2-2-2-1 plan. Commissioner Sterritt stated that the committee did not talk about that and has no intention of talking about it at this point. He said however that it has certainly been discussed in the past. Commissioner Griffin said if the committee is supposed to be gathering information in an unbiased way, it should present all of the plans that have been brought to the Board so the community can hear and weigh the information. Commissioner Sterritt explained that the committee has had two meetings with the Community Relations Committee and their recommendation to the committee was that the committee needed to decide what it wanted and in what direction it wanted to go. He said this is what the committee has done. He stated that the 4-2-1 plan has already been rejected by the Board, so the committee is not promoting this plan.

Vice-Chairman Joe Winslow stated that he enjoyed going to the forum at Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church and the event was well-received. He added that he is looking forward to going to the Weeksville Lions Club. He said what the committee heard at Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church was what the public felt was important more than what the Board thought was important. He stated that the public has read the information in the newspaper and he wanted to hear how they felt about this.

Commissioner Perry said he would applaud Commissioner Sterritt for directing the public form. He stated that everyone who was there had an opportunity to speak. He said the committee has been pretty open and anyone who has concerns should come to the meetings and express their thoughts. Commissioner Perry stated that he would support any plan that provides an opportunity to increase the number of minorities on the Board.

16. CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER:

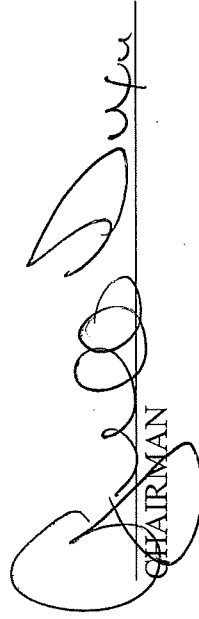
Chairman Dixon asked for a motion that the Board enter Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter. All staff were excused with the exception of the County Attorney.

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Lloyd Griffin that the Board enter Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter. The motion carried unanimously.

Upon the end of Closed Session;

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Cecil Perry that the Board return to Regular Session. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Joe Winslow to recess tonight's meeting until 2:00 PM Wednesday, April 10. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting was recessed at 8:15 PM.


CHAIRMAN


CLERK TO THE BOARD