

PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 17, 2013

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in an abbreviated work session on Monday, June 17, 2013 in the Community Room at the W.C. Witherspoon Memorial Library.

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:

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

The work session was called to order at 3:30 PM by Chairman Jeff Dixon.

1. PRESENTATION BY PASQUOTANK SOIL AND WATER DISTRICT:


Mr. Dwane Hinson, Soil and Water Technician, said he would like for the Board to consider two items today: 1) Development of a watershed scale plan to address some of the water quality problems on the Little River; and 2) Beginning work on a new special use water management district that is being requested by several land owners.

Mr. Hinson explained that there is now very little vegetation around the Little River which has affected the water quality. He said the water quality has been monitored for 20 years and it is experiencing nitrification and the fish are leaving similar to what happened in the Chowan River some years ago. He stated that everyone is responsible for this non-point source pollution problem which means it comes from everybody's yards and ditches. Mr. Hinson said there is no buffer along the river and they would like to restore that buffer and offer the property owners some kind of tax relief as an incentive. He stated that this would only include the flood plain area of the river which is the area where it floods during a rainfall and they would like to include about 300 feet on each side and declare it a no-cut zone in order to restore the buffer. Mr. Hinson said this particular area consists of 393 acres and the current tax value is \$100 per acre for a total tax value of \$39,380. He stated that these incentives would be used as leverage to obtain grants to subsidize the project. Mr. Hinson said they also want to work on drainage inlets and put a filter on them. They also want to try to improve drainage and put riparian buffers in some areas to increase the size of the ditches to increase the drainage rate, and put in innovative structures to control the total volume of flow from the ditches. Mr. Hinson explained that they need to do some clearing and snagging, improve the fish habitat, and establish a water quality monitoring system. He stated that they need someone to help them start drawing in some grants. Mr. Hinson asked the Board if it would be possible to appropriate \$7,500 this year to start working on this project. He asked if the Board will also consider a tax incentive for the property owners to encourage them to cooperate. He explained that Perquimans County has been approached and has also been requested to provide seed money for grants and tax incentives to restore the water quality on the Perquimans County side of the Little River. He noted that Perquimans County has given a positive response to the request.

County Attorney Mike Cox said it would be difficult to reduce the tax value when it is already \$100. He suggested possible conservation easements with the land owners whereby they would agree to let the timber grow in exchange for a reduced amount of taxes. Mr. Hinson stated that they just want a general consensus so that they could begin approaching land owners and get them onboard with the idea. He said how the incentives would be structured would be up to the county. The Board concurred to ask staff to look at this potential project after the completion of the budget and closeout of the fiscal year.

Mr. Hinson stated that he would like support from the Board to proceed with public meetings on a new special use water management district. He said this would actually be a sub-district and the land owners are all willing to go along with this. The County Attorney will research to determine what needs to be done to create this district.

The work session was adjourned at 4:05 PM.


CHAIRMAN


CLERK TO THE BOARD