

PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 17, 2014

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, November 17, 2014 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
Gary G. White
Frankie Meads

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dr. William R. Sterritt (*Out of Town*)

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 Jeff Dixon who recognized several guests in the audience. Commissioner Lloyd Griffin gave the invocation and Vice-Chairman Joe Winslow led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Chairman Dixon asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Vice-Chairman Winslow requested that the agenda be amended to add the following items recommended by the Finance Committee to the consent agenda: 1) Authorize eight hours of vacation time for one employee whose name will be drawn from the pool of all employees who contribute a minimum of \$24 to the United Way; and 2) Authorize outgoing Commissioner Gary White to purchase his county-issued iPad for \$1. Vice-Chairman Winslow also requested that the agenda be amended to add to new business *Adoption of Resolution in Support of Including US 158, US 168 and the Mid-Currituck Bridge on the Strategic Transportation Corridors Network Map.*

Motion was made by Joe Winslow, seconded by Cecil Perry to approve the amendments to the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

2. PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE TO COMMISSIONER GARY WHITE:

Chairman Dixon called on outgoing Commissioner Gary White and presented him with a plaque from the Board expressing appreciation for his four years of service as a County Commissioner. Commissioner Frankie Meads also made a presentation to Commissioner White of a handmade chair.

3. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes of November 3, 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. Five C's Inc.	328.11	
2. Five C's Inc.	483.81	
3. Five C's Inc.	155.21	121.96
4. Renaissance Commons LLC	8,379.00	6,780.38
5. Caribbean Cuisine	161.47	126.87
6. Sylvia Lynn Lewis	115.38	97.12
7. Tom Morgan		226.32

Solid Waste Releases:

Owner's Name	Parcel ID Number	Reason for Release
Gerald Kent Edward	P31-22	Vacant since 2008
Tony Lewis	50-L-8	Vacant since 2003
Tony Lewis	12-G-16A	Vacant since 2008
Tony Lewis	23-R-27	Vacant since 2003
Shirley B. White Etal	P93-9	Vacant since 2009

c. Approval of Eight Hours of Vacation Time for United Way Drawing
The Finance Committee has recommended that the Board authorize eight hours of vacation time for one employee whose name will be drawn from the pool of all employees who contribute a minimum of \$24 to the United Way.

d. Authorization for Commissioner White to Purchase His iPad
The Finance Committee has recommended that Commissioner Gary White be allowed to purchase his county-issued iPad for \$1. Vice-Chairman Winslow noted that the \$1 has already been paid.

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Joe Winslow to approve the consent agenda as amended. The motion carried.

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

		County	City
1.	Arnie & Moriel Helle	97.28	78.72
2.	John David Simpson	43.59	
3.	Burks Affordable Landscaping	74.11	
4.	Betsy Ann S. White	3.80	
5.	Elwood & Neva Hilts	69.92	56.58
6.	Alma E. Meads	24.32	
7.	Five C's Inc.	51.64	40.58
8.	Mary Kirby Rodgerson		44.34
9.	Steven Edward Swayne	33.65	
10.	Five's Inc.	1.97	
11.	Shawn Kelvin Heaten	11.09	13.71
12.	Five C's Inc.	51.50	
13.	Five C's Inc.	15.28	12.00
14.	Walter & Patricia Godfrey	78.28	
15.	Christopher Joseph Pittarelli	50.90	45.60
16.	Christopher Joseph Pittarelli	14.95	16.93
17.	Brian C. Williams	3.48	
18.	Brian C. Williams	3.30	
19.	Brian C. Williams	3.26	
20.	Brian C. Williams	6.74	

4. **PRESENTATION OF PROPOSALS FROM COMMISSIONER GARY WHITE:**

Commissioner Gary White presented the following proposals for the Board's consideration that he said he has been concerned with for awhile:

a. Send a Resolution to Legislators Requesting a Decrease in the Membership of the College of the Albemarle Board of Trustees
Commissioner White said Pasquotank County currently contributes \$1.4 million to College of The Albemarle and he believes that some of the other counties do not have "enough skin in the game". He stated that Gates County contributes \$6,000 per year to COA and has a seat on the COA Board of Trustees. He said he has talked to some members of the COA Board and some believe the Board is too big and that it is counterproductive to have 19 members. He explained that his understanding is that when the size of the COA Board was increased Representative Owens presented local legislation to authorize it and it was approved by the General Assembly. This was done in anticipation that other counties would feel the necessity to contribute a larger amount to College of The Albemarle, but this has not happened. Commissioner White noted that the only way to decrease the size of the Board would be to request our representatives in the General Assembly to introduce local legislation.

Vice-Chairman Joe Winslow commented that he serves on the COA Board of Trustees and since the addition of another campus at Currituck, the Board of Trustees has had a conversation about realigning the COA Board. He said it has been discussed that the COA Board of Trustees is too large and COA's attorney has said that a change in the structure of the COA Board may not require a resolution from the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners, but could be changed by the COA Board of Trustees. He stated as Pasquotank County's representative on the COA Board of Trustees, he would ask that he be allowed to carry this matter back to the Board of Trustees. He said he would express the Board's concern that the COA Board is too large and should be realigned and reduced in size. He stated that he would ask that this matter be acted on by the COA Board of Trustees as soon as possible. He said if the Board of Trustees cannot realign or reduce the board from 19 members, then a resolution to our legislators could accomplish this at a later date. The Board concurred to accept Vice-Chairman Winslow's recommendation.

b. Request Local Legislation Requiring that Any Public or Low-Income Housing in Pasquotank County (Including inside the City Limits) Be Approved by the Board of Commissioners which Has Responsibility to Fund Public Assistance Programs and Education

Commissioner White explained that while he has been on the Board of Commissioners Pasquotank County has gone from a Tier 2 county to a Tier 1 county. He said it is the fiscal responsibility of the Board of Commissioners to ensure the health, education and welfare of the people of Pasquotank County. He stated these three items make up the biggest portion of Pasquotank County's budget and he believes that anyone who wants to develop low-income housing anywhere in Pasquotank County should have to come to the Board of Commissioners for approval because of the effect on the county's budget. He added that he would like for other areas to share in the responsibility and provide public housing.

Chairman Dixon stated that the City Manager has provided a response to this proposal which is self-explanatory. County Attorney Mike Cox said that federal and state agencies would be involved in the development of public or low-income housing and federal and state laws would trump any local laws. Commissioner Frankie Meads pointed out that Pasquotank County could eventually be the home of 20,000 people who live in public housing or low-income housing and someone will have to pay the bills for the public assistance they will need or build schools to accommodate the increased population. Vice-Chairman Winslow noted that the issue is that the city does the planning and issues the permits for the construction and development of this housing and a solution is needed because the burden falls on the county to pay for social services and other services involving low-income population. He suggested that the county possibly receive some reimbursement or be a part of the permitting process. Commissioner Perry stated he has served on the Board of the Housing Authority and there are a lot of things that occur with regard to public housing in which the county might not want to be involved. Commissioner Griffin added that there are a lot of components to housing assistance programs including apartments that are built for low to moderate income families, rental housing, housing programs where a certain percentage is set aside for low income families, and public housing units. Commissioner Meads noted that this problem probably exists in many other areas of the state and officials in Raleigh may have some sympathy toward counties regarding this issue.

Chairman Dixon suggested that staff do further research on this issue and determine the scope of authority, if any, the county may have.

c. Petition the General Assembly to Give the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners Authority to Control a Three-Block Radius around the Pasquotank County Courthouse on an As-Needed Basis

Commissioner White explained that it has been an observation of his for at least ten years that every time the county schedules court and is subject to having three courts going on at the same time with a grand jury and a regular jury there is a problem with parking. He said it is a civic mandated responsibility for individuals to provide jury service for the judicial system of the county and the state and they should not have to worry about receiving parking tickets while serving on a jury. He stated that county government, not city government, is mandated by statute to operate the courts and he believes the county should be able to control parking on an as-needed basis when courts are in session and a jury pool is expected. Commissioner White said the current jury parking lot will not accommodate everyone who is required to be in court. He added that the Pasquotank County judicial system has to exist and the county has to provide it. County Manager Rodney Bunch agreed that there is not ample parking on days when court is in

session, however the county is not set up to operate parking at this time as it would require additional personnel for the Sheriff's Department to enforce.

Commissioner Griffin noted that in addition to jurors, law enforcement personnel, bailiffs, attorneys, probation staff and other court personnel need parking places on days of court. He suggested that parking passes be issued to them on the days they have to be in court. Vice-Chairman Winslow said he would like to see this turned over to staff to work with the city and try to reach a reasonable solution. Chairman Dixon suggested that the Building & Grounds Committee needs to develop a long-term plan for acquiring property for future parking. Commissioner Perry stated that the county needs to work closely with the city to try to resolve this parking problem since the city already has personnel in place. The Board concurred that staff should meet with the city to try to resolve the parking issue.

5. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INCLUDING US 158, US 168 AND THE MID-CURRITUCK BRIDGE ON THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS NETWORK MAP:

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin explained that during this year's restructuring of the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) the state identified major transportation corridors such as Highway 17. He said if Highway 17 were to be closed at the Virginia border due to a hurricane evacuation, the traffic from U.S. 168 in Currituck could not enter into the Hampton Roads area. He said there would be impacts on roads through Pasquotank County, including US 158 to US 168, as they would provide evacuation routes to the western part of the state. He stated that the proposed resolution has been approved by the RPO Board and the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners is requested to adopt the resolution.

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Joe Winslow to adopt the following resolution. The motion carried and the following resolution was adopted.

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INCLUDING US 158, US 168 AND THE MID-CURRITUCK BRIDGE ON THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS NETWORK MAP

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has recently replaced the Strategic Highway Corridors network map adopted by the North Carolina Board of Transportation in 2004 with the Strategic Transportation Corridors map; and

WHEREAS, the draft Strategic Transportation Corridors network map omits US 158 east of US 17, US 168 and the Mid-Currituck Bridge which were previously included on the Strategic Highway Corridors network map; and

WHEREAS, these corridors are vital for the economic development, mobility and safety of residents and visitors of Northeastern North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the US 158 and US 168 corridors are the primary hurricane evacuation routes for residents and visitors of the Outer Banks and the State of Virginia has informed us, as part of the Barco Diversion Plan, they may close the border and require all North Carolina residents and visitors to enter Virginia via I-95; and

WHEREAS, the Mid-Currituck Bridge would serve as an alternate hurricane evacuation route for residents and visitors of the Outer Banks, reduce congestion, create jobs, and create tax revenue for the State from toll revenue; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners hereby supports the inclusion of US 158 east of US 17, US 168 and the Mid-Currituck Bridge on the draft Strategic Transportation Corridors Map.

ADOPTED by the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners this 17th day of November, 2014.

6. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER:

County Manager Rodney Bunch said he would like to follow-up on a report he made several weeks ago about a potential land use study in combination with the neighboring counties of Currituck, Camden, Perquimans, Gates, and the City of Chesapeake, Virginia. The purpose of

the study is to promote compatible uses and promote military sustainment in the City of Chesapeake and the five counties in North Carolina that border Virginia. Mr. Bunch reported that he and Planning Director Shelley Cox, along with managers from the other counties and the City of Chesapeake visited the Northwest Radar Site at Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads to see the operations. He stated that North Carolina Department of Commerce representatives and a representative from the Department of Defense were there and asked if the counties will consider participating in the study. He explained that they indicated at least three of the local governments would need to agree to participate in the study before the study would be done. Mr. Bunch said it was emphasized at the meeting that this would be a study and would not mandate anything. He stated that each of the participants in the study would learn about the radar site operations, what they are trying to protect, and any future effects. He stated that he was asked to bring this to the Board of Commissioners and ask if the Board would consider participation in the study. Assuming the county decides to participate, the next steps would be to decide which of the six units of government will be the lead agency. He said the Department of Commerce may be able to assume that responsibility. He stated that the Chesapeake City Manager indicated that he has been involved in one of these studies and has offered to be the lead agency.

Mr. Bunch asked if the Board would like to allow representatives from the Department of Defense and the North Carolina Department of Commerce to make a short presentation to the Board to determine if the Board is interested in moving forward with the study.

Chairman Dixon stated that at least three of the local governments involved would have to agree to the study before it could move forward. He said at the quarterly meeting of chairmen and managers this was discussed and the counties of Camden and Currituck expressed great concern and lobbied hard for the other counties to not move forward with this study. He noted that at a recent forum the Military Affairs Liaison for the state commented that it might be a good idea to move forward with it and the counties would have the option to accept it.

7. CALENDAR.

The Clerk reviewed the calendar of upcoming meetings and events.

8. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Frankie Meads stated that the Board discussed county real estate at the last meeting and did not talk much about the old bus garage. He said this is something that needs to be discussed in the future because there are a lot of Sheriff's Department cars and junk cars stored there and the property needs to be cleaned up. He stated that the garage needs some work to make it look a little more attractive.

Commissioner Meads said he recently read an article in "County News" which reported that a county in New Jersey was able to cut taxes and still have fund balance and save millions of dollars during the recession. He stated that he would like for the county to develop a plan to get the county out of debt.

Commissioner Meads stated that the Board is going to miss Commissioner Gary White. He told Mr. White he will miss his presence although he did not always agree with him.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin said he would also like to say farewell to Commissioner White and welcome Commissioner-elect Bettie Parker who will take the oath of office at the December 1 meeting. He stated that Mrs. Parker will have big shoes to fill. He added that Commissioner White was always straightforward and spoke from the heart. Commissioner Griffin thanked Commissioner White for his time and wished him the best.

Vice-Chairman Joe Winslow stated that Commissioner White will be missed and he would like to also welcome Commissioner-elect Bettie Parker. He said it has been a pleasure serving with Commissioner White.

Commissioner Cecil Perry stated that he feels he can make comments about Commissioner White and Commissioner-elect Parker because he taught both of them in school. He said it has been great working with Commissioner White. He stated he would also like to thank Chairman Dixon for allowing him to express some of his concerns, some of which were not very popular. He also thanked Chairman Dixon for his service as Chairman.

Commissioner Gary White stated that it has been his pleasure to serve with the other members of the Board and it has been an absolute challenge for him. He thanked Commissioner Griffin who

was the first Chairman with whom he served and also thanked current Chairman Dixon. He said Commissioner Perry was his geometry teacher in high school and Commissioner-elect Parker was his algebra teacher. He wished Mrs. Parker good luck during her tenure on the Board. Commissioner White also thanked former Commissioner Bill Trueblood and his wife for their attendance at tonight's meeting. He said he enjoyed serving on the Board with Mr. Trueblood for two years. Commissioner White said it has been a pleasure working with county staff who made his job more enjoyable. He also thanked his wife for attending tonight's meeting.

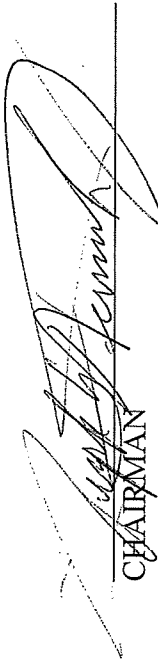
Chairman Dixon stated that he has been given the name of Daniel West as a potential appointee to the Community Relations Commission to fill the slot for a 16 to 30 year-old. He said he is in agreement with the recommendation and has agreed to appoint Mr. West to the CRC.

Chairman Dixon said he has thoroughly enjoyed working with Commissioner White over the past four years and it has been a very vibrant experience. He stated that he would like to wish Mr. White the best.

Chairman Dixon said since this is his last meeting as Chairman, he would like to congratulate each member of the Board on their accomplishments over the last two years. He said the biggest thing was the hospital lease which resulted in a lot of stress for members of the Board. He stated that the Board was informed of the retirement of former County Manager Randy Keaton after 26 years and fortunately there was someone already on staff, Assistant County Manager Rodney Bunch, who could fill the position. He said redistricting was another issue that took a lot of effort from the Board. He stated that the Board learned a lot while looking at this and found out if anything is going to be done, it boils down to a referendum. He said if this proceeds, it will be done under the watch of another Chairman. Chairman Dixon said the county was also able to complete a rewrite of the county's Personnel Handbook after several years. He stated that the thing that took the wind out of the Commissioners was the county revaluation which resulted in a big decrease in the county's total valuation. He pointed out that the Commissioners took a big hit on that and had to make some tough decisions, but they all survived. Vice-Chairman Winslow noted that in the middle of a recession the county's financial rating was improved from an A- to an A. He said he does not know of any other county in the state that has done that while keeping all services. He stated that it's because of Chairman Dixon and his direction that this improvement was able to be made. Chairman Dixon pointed out that he was not able to get everything off his plate because two years is not enough. He said the new Chairman will have to deal with the issue of office space for the DA and Public Defender and the refusal of other counties to pay their share of the office expense. He stated that he had asked that this issue be postponed due to the election because he did not want this to be an issue in the District Attorney's race. Chairman Dixon said another thing that is going to have to be looked at is county employees' salaries. He stated that the Department of Social Services has lost nine social workers to other counties for substantially larger salaries. He stated that the county needs to look for better revenue streams that could help College of The Albemarle and the county's schools, and needs to be able to count on that revenue. He said he is not sure where the county's relationship with Camden County is going, as Pasquotank County has several agreements with Camden, and this is an issue that will be facing the Board. Chairman Dixon stated that he would especially like to thank the members of the executive staff who run the county and the 309 county employees who do a wonderful job for the county day in and day out. He thanked all members of the Board for working with him and getting a lot done.

Chairman Dixon asked if there was any further business to come before the Board. There being none, he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was made by Gary White, seconded by Frankie Meads to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.



CHAIRMAN

Zaven Jennings
CLERK TO THE BOARD