

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or business to discuss, the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. on motion made by Joseph W. Hoffler, seconded by Alan Lennon.

Fondella A. Leigh, Vice Chair

Clerk to the Board

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WORK SESSION
February 17, 2020
7:00 p.m.

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners met in a regular Work Session on Monday, February 17, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room located on the first floor of the Perquimans County Courthouse Annex.

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| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Wallace Nelson, Chairman | Fondella Leigh, Vice Chair |
| | Joseph W. Hoffler | Alan Lennon |
| | Charles Woodard | |
| MEMBERS ABSENT: | T. Kyle Jones | |
| OTHERS PRESENT: | Frank Heath, County Manager | Mary Hunnicutt, Clerk to the Board |
| | Hackney High, County Attorney | |

After the Chairman called the meeting to order, Commissioner Lennon gave the invocation and the Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance. The following matters were discussed.

SHELBY WHITE, SHERIFF

Chairman Nelson recognized Shelby White, Sheriff, to discuss the Community Policing Grant application that he wishes to prepare. This is a micro-grant that has requirements similar to the COPS Grant but does not require the employee to be a sworn police officer. These grants are pushing community policing. This micro-grant is for \$100,000 which can be extended for two years. He was told that the County could actually apply for two of these grants possibly getting \$200,000. Community Policing is growing and these grants will assist in improving this program. This grant will be used for a Community Policing/Grant Manager Position. Mr. While distributed a copy of the job description for this position. Not only will this individual be in charge of community policing but he/she will be responsible for writing and managing grants. He has an individual in mind for the position that has helped them write several successful grant applications. Community Policing is assisting with community programs like local food drives, help with the food pantry, assist local churches and schools, etc. In order to move forward with the application, he needed the Commissioners approval. He further stated that it is a no-match grant. After his presentation, he asked if there were any comments or questions from the Board. The following questions were asked:

- **Commissioner Lennon:** Mr. Lennon wanted to clarify that this grant would cover this employee's salary. Mr. White said that this grant can be used for the salary and any equipment needed for this person to perform his/her job as long as you can prove that it was used for the Community Policing program.
- **Commissioner Woodard:** Mr. Woodard asked, if after the two years is up, would the county need to reapply or is this a one-shot deal. Mr. White said that he thought that it could be applied for again but he feels that, after the two years, they would probably expect the county to pick up the position. Mr. White feels that, once this position is approved, the County would probably see that it would be beneficial to the county.
- **Commissioner Lennon:** Mr. Lennon asked if Mr. White was planning on applying for two grants. Mr. White said that he was. Mr. Lennon also asked if there is a requirement for the county to pick up anything at the end of the grant. Mr. White said that it was not.
- **Commissioner Hoffler:** Mr. Hoffler asked if it was a state or federal grant. Mr. White said that it is a federal grant through the COPS program.
- **Chairman Nelson:** Mr. Nelson asked if the COPS grant required the county to take over after the position after grant period had ended. Mr. White said that the three-year grant program does but not the micro-grant that he is applying for.

Mr. White expressed his feelings that, once this individual was hired and worked for a year, he was confident that the Board would see how beneficial this position was. He further stated that, when he first became Sheriff, he tried applying for grants and found that he was out of his league and also he did not have sufficient amount of time to complete the application and manage it. County Manager Heath explained that the Board is not approving the grant tonight but authorizing Mr. White to apply for it. It was the consensus of the Board to allow Mr. White to proceed with the application.

2nd AMENDMENT RESOLUTION

Chairman Nelson explained that the County has received some requests wanting the Board to adopt a 2nd Amendment Resolution. County Attorney High and County Manager Heath prepared the draft resolution that was included in the Board's Agenda Packet. The Board will need to let County Manager Heath how they want to proceed with this matter. Several of the commissioners stated that they had been approached by residents about adopting one or not adopting one. After giving some background as to why this is being considered, County Attorney High explained his concerns about this matter. Mr. High stated that some of the Resolutions that have been passed went as far to say that the Resolution was adopted by duly elected County Commissioners who swore on the Bible that they would uphold the laws of the State of North Carolina. Some of the Resolutions went far enough to say that, if it infringes on the 2nd Amendment in any way, the Commissioners were not going to follow the laws of North Carolina. That would be a problem with their oath and cause the Commissioners individual problems. It could also open them up to liability. Some of them also went to the point where they said we are not going to force any laws passed by North Carolina and that they were going to offer sanctuary to people who want to come to North Carolina and exercise their rights. As lawyers, they have to look at the worse scenario in any given situation. The way some of them were worded could be opening up the County to some legal liability and financial liability if someone were injured by a gun here and by a gun incident that could have been prevented if we were following the law but chose not to follow it. There were some concerns about how some Resolutions were worded and the one he and Mr. Heath prepared

states a general support for the 2nd Amendment but does not go as far to say that we are not going to follow the laws of the State of North Carolina. Mr. High further stated that some of the board members may want the more stringent Resolution but he has to warn you of the possible liabilities involved. It is the Board's decision to make. He is there to advise them and hopes that the Board would keep his advice in mind when taking action on this Resolution. No individual from the county has asked to speak on behalf of this Resolution but he understands that a couple of the Commissioners have received comments from the public. County Manager Heath stated that we did have one citizen contact him to enact a Resolution.

Commissioner Hoffer expressed his concerns. He stated that he is pro-2nd Amendment and pro-firearms protection. He does feel that a background check should be done before you are given a weapon. Most of the people want a background check. This does not infringe on anyone purchasing a weapon. Mr. Hoffer stated that he would like to read the proposed Resolution prior to taking action on it. Mr. High, Mr. Heath, and Ms. Hunnicutt explained that the draft Resolution was included in the Commissioners' Agenda Packet. Mr. Hoffer said that he had trouble with his internet and did not have the opportunity to review it. Mr. High provided Mr. Hoffer with a copy of the draft Resolution. No action will be taken tonight. We just wanted to share it with the Board so that the issues could be discussed. County Manager Heath said that he just wanted the Board to be aware and not walk into a meeting with 300 people there to discuss this Resolution. After further discussion regarding the language of the Resolution, it was the consensus of the Board to place the Resolution on the March agenda for action.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Chairman Nelson stated that he was at the NCAC Board of Trustees meeting last week and provided information on the following matters for information only:

- **Federal Grants:** Mr. Nelson explained that the Commerce Centre Park is not included in the opportunity zone which scores a lot of points for federal grants. Hertford is an opportunity zone but it does not cover areas on the south side of US Highway 17 which is where our Commerce Centre Park is. He has talked to Congressman Greg Murphy's representative in Edenton about having Dr. Murphy come to Hertford to tour the Commerce Centre area the next time he is in Edenton to see if we could get the Commerce Centre Park in the opportunity zone.
- **Opioid Litigation Settlement:** Mr. Nelson said that this is moving along. There has been a proposed settlement made in this case. A committee of five county attorneys, five county commissioners, and five other individuals was set up to review the proposed settlement. The settlement is for \$16 billion dollars (\$1 million per year for 16 years). County Manager Heath explained that this was for the State Department of Justice litigation not private litigation. This would include all the non-litigation counties as well and, at some point, the County would probably need to sign some paper to participate in the settlement and that possible financial payment may have to be given. It would not be like a Golden Leaf item but it will be funds given directly to the counties to combat the opioid epidemic. He further explained what programs this could be used for.
- **1st District NCACC & Albemarle Commission Meeting:** They are having a Manager/Chairman meeting for each county represented by Albemarle Commission. They have had about three already. What they discuss are issues important to the counties. At the last meeting, they had representatives from the volunteer fire department program.
- **Town of Hertford Meeting:** Mr. Nelson and Mr. Heath met with Earnell Brown, Hertford Mayor, and Pam Hurdle, Hertford Town Manager, to keep the discussion going about the 911 fees. County Manager Heath stated that it was a re-education meeting.
- **Commissioners' Retreat:** Mr. Nelson reminded everyone about the Commissioners' Retreat on March 20th from noon until finished. If any of the Commissioners have items that they wish to discuss, please give them to him or to Mr. Heath.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Clerk to the Board
