

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Heath, County Manager/Deputy Clerk to the Board
Tracy Mathews, Finance Officer

DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

The following department supervisors presented their budget requests for FY 2022-2023:

- 5:00 p.m. – Howard Williams – Recreation Department
- 5:30 p.m. – Jewel Winslow – Cooperative Extension
- 6:00 p.m. – Shelby White – Sheriff’s Department
- 6:30 p.m. – Jackie Frierson – Register of Deeds
- 7:00 p.m. – Jonathan Nixon – EMS/Emergency Management/
Communications

ADJOURNMENT

After the last Departmental Budget Presentation, the meeting was adjourned.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Clerk to the Board

REGULAR MEETING
May 2, 2022
7:00 p.m.

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Monday, May 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Perquimans County Library located at 514 S. Church Street, Hertford, NC 27944.

- MEMBERS PRESENT: Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman Fondella A. Leigh, Vice Chair
Thelma Finch-Copeland Joseph W. Hoffler
T. Kyle Jones Charles Woodard
- MEMBERS ABSENT: None
- OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Heath, County Manager Mary Hunnicutt, Clerk to the Board
Hackney High, County Attorney

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Jones gave the invocation and Chairman Nelson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Chairman Nelson stated that a copy of the Agenda was at their seats tonight. Thelma Finch-Copeland made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Joseph W. Hoffler and unanimously approved by the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Nelson asked if there were any items that the Board wished to remove from the Consent Agenda to discuss. There being none, the following items were considered to be routine and were unanimously approved on motion made by Charles Woodard, seconded by Joseph W. Hoffler.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** April 4, 2022 Regular Meeting, April 18, 2022 Joint Work Session with Board of Education, and April 18, 2022 Work Session (cancelled) were approved.
2. **Tax Refund Approval:**
John Michael Hardison ----- \$115.75
Vehicle licensed in S.C.; 7-month refund. Account #58056195.
3. **Personnel Matters:**

Employee Name	Employee Job Title	Action Required	Grade/Step	New Salary	Effective Date
Kimberly Meads	Part-Time/Fill-In AEMT	Appointment	66/1	\$17.91/hr.	04/01/2022
Kayla Trader	Part-Time/Fill-In AEMT	Appointment	66/1	\$17.91/hr.	04/01/2022
David Jensen	Part-Time/Fill-In Paramedic	Appointment	68/2	\$20.04/hr.	04/01/2022
Marica Basemore	IMC I Working Against IMC II	Appointment	61/3	\$31,380	05/01/2022
Stacey Ward	Business Personal Property Tax Clerk	Appointment	61/1	\$29,886	05/01/2022
Jackie Green	Deputy Direct of Elections	Appointment	58/4	\$28,186	05/01/2022
Erica Critcher	Deputy Director of Elections	Appointment	58/4	\$28,186	07/01/2022
Alyssa Pumbo	EMS Full-Time Compliance Officer/Paramedic	Promotion	69/4	\$45,743	07/01/2022
Lindsey Stevens	Permanent Part-Time Certified Telecommunicator	Promotion	62/4	\$16.16/hr.	04/01/2022
Kathryn Boyles	EMS Shift Supervisor/Paramedic	Resignation			05/06/2022
Kathryn Boyles	Part-Time/Fill-In Paramedic	Appointment	68/2	\$20.04/hr.	05/07/2022
Dylan Lilley	Perquimans Field Crops Agent	Resignation			04/29/2022
Michaela Madden	Part-Time/Fill-In Paramedic	Resignation			04/12/2022
Kevin Ayers	Part-Time/Fill-In Paramedic	Resignation			04/12/2022
Caitlyn Gardner	IMC II	Resignation			05/01/2022

4. **Step Increases:**

Employee Name	Employee Job Title	Grade/Step	New Salary	Effective Date
Nakindra Downing	Certified Telecommunicator	62/2	\$32,010	06/01/2022
Anne Johnson	Part-Time/Fill-In Certified Telecommunicator	62/4	\$16.16/hr.	02/01/2022
Crystal Wright	Certified Telecommunicator	62/7	\$36,154	03/01/2022

5. **Budget Amendments:**

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 34
GENERAL FUNDS**

CODE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	AMOUNT	
		INCREASE	DECREASE
10-335-000	Miscellaneous Revenue	800	
10-500-150	Building - Maintenance/Repair	800	
EXPLANATION: To amend FY 21/22 budget to include funds for monument repairs.			

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 35
GENERAL FUNDS**

CODE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	AMOUNT	
		INCREASE	DECREASE
10-348-000	State Grants - Social Services	3,814	
10-610-192	DSS - Crisis Intervention	3,814	
EXPLANATION: To amend FY 21/22 budget to include additional funding for Crisis Intervention as awarded by the State.			

6. **Board Reappointments/Resignations/Appointment/Update:** The following board reappointments/resignations/appointment/update were approved by the Board:

Name	Board/Committee	Action Taken	Term	Effective Date
White, Mary	Tourism Development Authority – Industrial Rep	Reappointment	3 yrs.	04/01/2022

PRESENTATION & INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

- The following presentation was made:
 - Frank Heath, County Manager:** Mr. Heath presented a plaque to Nicole Elliott who had been working in the Perquimans County Social Services Department for over 12 years. Her retirement date is effective May 1, 2022. Ms. Elliott thanked the Board for the opportunity to work for the Social Services Department. The Board thanked her for her service and wished her the best in her retirement.
- The following employee was introduced to the Board:
 - Susan Chaney:** Ms. Chaney, Social Services Director, introduced Kanisha Walston, IMC I working against IMC II (appointed 2/1/2022). Ms. Walston thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with Perquimans County. The Board welcomed her.

COMMISSIONER’S CONCERNS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Nelson reminded the Board that the NCACC District I & II Meeting will be held this week on May 5, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in Edenton, NC. He encouraged the Board members to attend. It gives the commissioners the opportunity to meet and greet commissioners and staff from other counties. There being no further commissioner’s concerns or committee reports, Chairman Nelson moved forward with the meeting.

UPDATES FROM COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Heath presented the following updates:

- Departmental Budget Presentations:** Mr. Heath explained that the Department Heads presented their budget requests to the Board on April 27 and 28, 2022. Social Services and the Board of Education will present their budgets on May 11, 2022.
- NCACC District I & II Meeting:** Mr. Heath concurred with Chairman Nelson and encouraged the Board to attend the NCACC District meeting on May 5, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in Edenton.
- Memorial Day Activities:** Mr. Heath explained that Preston Spear, Veterans Officer, asked him to request one of the commissioners to place the wreath at the Veteran’s Memorial on May 30, 2022, during the Memorial Day festivities. Commissioner Leigh agreed to do this. Mr. Heath asked Mary Hunnicutt to notify Mr. Spear who will contact Ms. Leigh for further details.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT RESIGNATION

County Manager Heath reported that Dave Goss, our Economic Development Consultant, resigned on May 1, 2022. Mr. Heath recognized Mr. Goss who had requested to address the Board. Mr. Goss thanked the Board for allowing him to serve and for their support as the County’s Economic Development Consultant for 15 years. Mr. Goss explained how his appointment came about and how he wanted to work with the County with their Strategic County Plan. During this time as the County’s Economic Development Consultant, he said that we saw many successes and failures. He listed the following four disappointments:

- Marine Inner Basin:** The length of time to achieve this inner basin was long due to obtaining permits. Because of this, we lost several potential businesses that would have come. In June, they will be accepting bids to build the basin and we hope that their figures will agree with our figures and that we will begin work on the water basin.
- Don Juan Building:** This was a 24-acre site with an 80,000 square foot building on it that was damaged during the hurricane and never repaired. It is now to the point that it cannot be used without a large amount of renovations.
- Job Incubator Building:** This building was erected to assist small business to get started and, once they were able to move into their own facilities, they were supposed to leave. The problem was they never left. It was then decided to sell the building and the county purchased it for the Perquimans County Senior Center.
- The Lansing Building:** Twenty years ago, the State had spec building money available to the counties to build a 30,000 square foot spec building. It was vacant for several years until Brunswick purchased it, who sold it to Lansing. Lansing remained in the building for several years before the recession hit so they moved their facility to the Outer Banks. Unfortunately, to the county’s economic development, the space was leased to a Charter School, which has not open yet. At the present time, it is still leased to the Charter School. He does not know what will be happening there but he hopes that at some point in the future that it will become available for commercial activity.

He then reviewed the many successes that the County had in Economic Development:

- FedEx Building:** Mr. Goss feels that the biggest success that Perquimans County had in economic development was the FedEx Building. They were going to move their facilities to Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County. At that time, the Board established incentives to encourage businesses to build in Perquimans County. This allowed them to building in our commerce park. Most of their employees are local people.
- East Coast Steel Fabrication Company:** This company moved to Perquimans County about one year ago. They have already built three barges in their new facility. They are building another facility. They will be a major player in Perquimans County’s economic development.
- Relationship with NC Marine Industrial Park Authority:** We would not be where we are with the Marine Inner Basin if it had not been for the NC Marine Industrial Park Authority. He hopes that this relationship will continue even after he has gone.
- Amazon Wind Farm:** Every time he sees the tax income that Perquimans County receives from this property, he is very happy that it is Perquimans County.
- Marine Inner Basin:** If we can get successful bids on the inner basin project, it would be great. His disappointment is that he will not be here to see it happen. He knows that, when that basin is built, we will have a number of businesses come to the commerce center park.

The last item Mr. Goss wanted to talk about was the off-shore wind farm activity. He attended a conference a couple of years ago in Raleigh, NC. His eyes were opened that something of this magnitude

was happening right in our backyard. He joined an international group called Business Network for Off-Shore Wind. The expansion of off-shore wind over the last two years has been astronomical. Two years ago, there were two wind farms being pursued in the Atlantic Ocean. Today, there are nineteen wind farms in the Atlantic Ocean. One was off the coast of Virginia and the other one was off the coast of North Carolina (Kitty Hawk). This month they are planning on completing another one off the shore of North Carolina (Wilmington) and another two off the shore of South Carolina. Each wind farm has 100 wind turbines. By 2030, there should be over 2,000 wind turbines in the Atlantic Ocean. Each turbine will produce 30 gigawatts of power. A gigawatt will power 40,000 to 60,000 homes. This industry has over \$100 billion capital investment. Each turbine has about 8,000 components, which means there is a huge supply investment available. One of the major hubs for the development of the off-shore wind industry is in Virginia. We are perfectly located to receive a spin-off of some of that supply chain. Because of his involvement with this group, he was recently appointed to the Governor's Task Force for Off-Shore Wind. He hopes to keep active in this Task Force. The key component to this Task Force is for northeast North Carolina because of its location to the supply hub in Virginia. Sometimes it is easier to get to the hub from northeast North Carolina than it is other ways.

Mr. Goss encourages that Board to continue to support the economic development that is available to Perquimans County. With this, the County will see a growth in providing jobs for our local people. He thanked the Board for all their support during his 15 years. Chairman Nelson thanked him for his service.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following public comment was made:

➤ **Kim Brinn:** Ms. Brinn made the following comments about changing the three year requirement to pay taxes on property:

Perquimans County Board of Commissioners regular meeting

Good evening all. My name is Kim Brinn, 210 North Front St, thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I am very excited to learn that ZLS will be reporting to the board next month on their progress in collecting taxes for the county and the town of Hertford. It is my understanding that they have received over 100 properties that have been delinquent in their taxes for 3 years or more. I know that in the town of Hertford especially most if not all of the properties have been vacant for many years and since we have had no enforcement of our codes in our town in addition to not paying taxes, these properties are deteriorating before our very eyes contributing to the blight in our town. It is a well known fact that blight leads to crime, rodent infestation, safety hazards and deteriorating property values for all of us resulting in less income for the town and the county.

Since it is the county's responsibility to collect taxes and foreclose when necessary on properties throughout the county, I would like to ask the commissioners to consider allowing only one year of delinquency on a property before initiating action. As we see, it can take over a year or longer for the process with ZLS and that just increases the time a potential investor who wants to buy the property, perhaps via internet auction, and fix it up has to wait to begin the process. Until resolved, the house continues to deteriorate until it will no longer be able to be renovated losing a historic property and changing the character of our county and town as a result. Many of the owners of these properties have no current contact information which will require the detective work of ZLS to take action.

As people continue to relocate to Perquimans County and Hertford due to the crowding, crime, and poor schools they ask about these properties. There are historic tax credits for some of these properties where a buyer can take up to a 40% credit on their income taxes if it was renovated to specified standards and rented. In addition, the town of Hertford is also in an economic opportunity zone which is another incentive for investors. There are also over 50 vacant lots in the town limits that have existing electricity and water which is attractive for developers since they don't have to pay the cost for the infrastructure to be built. As these houses are brought back to life there is opportunity for first time home buyers with the assistance of programs in Elizabeth City to live in a safe, energy efficient home within the town limits. There is a housing shortage in our country and revitalizing these properties would help ease this shortage as well as increase the population in Hertford, thereby increasing the tax revenue which provides drivable roads- no inverted speed bumps, affordable utilities and other services for our residents.

So, I urge you all to consider changing the three year requirement to pay taxes on property. It is everyone's responsibility to pay their taxes in full and on time and no one should own property if they can't meet this requirement.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or business to discuss, the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. on motion made by Charles Woodard, seconded by Joseph W. Hoffer.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Clerk to the Board
