

March 13, 2019

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Martin County Governmental Center, Commissioners' Boardroom at 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

ASSEMBLY

Those in attendance: Chairman Tommy Bowen, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Elmo "Butch" Lilley, Commissioner Ronnie Smith, Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, County Manager David Bone, County Attorney Richard James, Clerk to the Board Jessica Godard and Finance Director/Deputy Clerk Cindy Ange.

Chairman Bowen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Bond led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Smith provided the invocation.

Chairman Bowen extended a welcome to everyone in attendance. Chairman Bowen recognized the following elected/appointed official in attendance: Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin, Williamston Commissioner Ronell Rogers, and Sheriff Tim Manning. Also in attendance were Chief Deputy Drew Robinson and Soil and Water Conservation District Board Chairman Richard Cannon.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Smith suggested moving Item 9 – Closed Session N. C. G. S. § 143-318.11(a) (6) – Personnel after Item 5 (Presentations).

Commissioner Smith made the MOTION to approve the agenda as revised, with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Carnell Norfleet, 1440 West Park Road, Williamston

Mr. Norfleet voiced his concerns regarding the conditions of the roads in his neighborhood (West Park). Mr. Norfleet stated the conditions of the roads had deteriorated over the years since moving there in 1996. He stated he was told the road would be paved within two years after moving there, but it had not been. Mr. Norfleet stated the road was used by several residents and school buses, which increased the wear and tear on the road. Mr. Norfleet previously went to the Town of Williamston regarding the issue, but the area was not within the city limits.

Mr. Norfleet stated the conditions of the road caused issues with vehicles (increased maintenance). Mr. Norfleet was requesting something be done regarding the conditions of the road.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Smith made the MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

1. **Minutes** for February 13, 2019 Regular & Closed Sessions, and February 21, 2019 Special Called Meeting.
2. **Financial Report** for January 2019 included for informational purposes.
3. **Trillium Health Resources Quarterly Fiscal Monitoring Report** included for informational purposes.
4. **Tax Assessor – Tax Refund Requests – February 2019 – None**
5. **Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders – February 2019**

Year Levy	Lname	Fname	Reason	Value	Total
2019	Bullock	Kent Ray	Mileage		29.79
2019	Bullock	Monica Reynold	Mileage		17.75
2019	Church of Christ, Inc.	Green Memorial	Exempt Property		54.18
2019	Kennedy	Deborah Jo	Over Assessment		46.97
2019	Mideast Regional	Housing Authority	Exempt Property		54.34
2019	Peaks	Allen	Over Assessment		11.96
				Total:	\$

6. **Tax Collector’s Report – February 2019**

	Category	Feb-19	Feb 19 Y-T-D
Real Property	20	\$243,500.45	\$8,461,924.53
Personal Property	25	<u>20,231.56</u>	<u>4,661,067.09</u>
Total		\$263,732.01	\$13,122,991.62
Motor Vehicle	30	<u>136.32</u>	<u>881.49</u>
Total MV		\$136.32	\$881.49
All Total		\$263,868.33	\$13,123,873.11

7. **Board Appointments/Reappointments**

Airport Commission

On behalf of the Airport Commission, Chairman Buck Davis requested that the Board of Commissioners appoint Mr. Simon Perry to fill a vacant position on the Airport Commission.

The term for Mr. Perry would be for four years, which would expire January 31st, 2023.

The Board of Commissioners APPROVED the appointment of Mr. Simon Perry to the Airport Commission, as part of the consent agenda.

Bear Grass ETJ Planning & Zoning Board

On behalf of the Bear Grass ETJ Planning & Zoning Board, Mayor Charlotte Griffin recommended the reappointment of Ms. Diane Rogerson for another three year term which would expire March 31, 2022.

The Board of Commissioners APPROVED the reappointment of Ms. Diane Rogerson to the Bear Grass ETJ Planning & Zoning Board, as part of the consent agenda.

8. Clerk Report (included for informational purposes)

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE (S) – None

PRESENTATIONS

2020 US Census Kick-off

Ms. Bernadette Richards with the US Census was in attendance to present a PowerPoint regarding the importance of the upcoming 2020 Census. The goal of a Census is to count everyone once, only once and in the right place. The presentation discussed the history of the Census, and how the Census data may affect the representation a state receives in the House of Representatives. The goal of the 2020 census is to have at least an 82% response rate from all citizens.

Ms. Richards explained the privacy and confidentiality of all information collected by the US Census, and highlighted that Census workers never ask residents for full social security numbers or money/donations. Information gathered by the US Census was used in various ways, including planning for transportation and housing needs and federal funding of programs.

Ms. Richards highlighted new initiatives of the US Census, which include eliminating paper and incorporating the use of handheld data collection devices, such as smart phones. Target populations in the US Census included children 5 years of age and younger, veterans, people with disabilities, homeless, rural population, low income, senior citizens, migrant farm workers, foreign-born immigrants, persons with limited English proficiency, and renters.

Ms. Richards stressed the importance of partnership programs, which ensure the most useful results possible in data collection. Ms. Richards discussed the formation of the Complete Count Committee, which is a volunteer committee with the goal of coordinating resources to ensure adequate participation in the Census program. Ms. Richards stated the Census Bureau would provide support to work directly with each Complete Count Committee. Ms. Richards also reported job opportunities with the Census Bureau.

County Manager David Bone recalled the work with the Mid-East Commission in the LUCA program to obtain updated addressing information which would be helpful in completing Census counts. Information regarding Census jobs and Complete Count Committee would be put on the County website and Facebook page.

The Board thanked Ms. Richardson for the information provided.

2018 Year in Review for Martin County

County Manager David Bone provided a presentation about the projects and accomplishments in Martin County in 2018.

The projects highlighted in County Manager's Bone presentation included:

- Weitron
- Completion of rail project to Weitron / industrial park
- Martin County Schools received \$5.3 million in grant funding for a Career Technical Center
- Progress on the new Martin County 911 Center and Regional Back-up facility
- Completion of the White Oak paving / assessment project
- Martin County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (adopted by NCDOT Board December 2018)
- Continuation of rewarding employees through implementation of Pay & Classification plan and merit increases
- 2nd year of Supervisor Training
- Martin County Airport Improvements – Drainage project
- Drainage Grants – total of \$554,176 to clear streams
- SCOPE Certification – Martin County Adult & Aging Services

Other 2018 Highlights included:

- Several new officials in Martin County in 2018
- Implementation of OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) Trust
- Commissioner Ronnie Smith elected 1st Vice President of the NC Association of County Commissioners

Expectations for 2019 included:

- Completion of Water District #1 Water Line Enhancement Project - \$1.476 million grant
- Completion of Ray Street building renovation and relocation for Martin County Transit
- NC Rural Center, Golden Leaf initiative for the Northeast
- Continued Advocacy for Debt Relief for MCRWASA
- \$1.013 million Rural ReadySites grant award for industrial park infrastructure improvements
- Martin County explores grant application for a horse trail
- Martin-Bertie Leadership Academy
- Martin County Airport Improvements – Site Prep for AWOS; design of Full Parallel Taxiway
- Implementation of the MTW District Health Department Mobile Dental Clinic

County Manager Bone discussed additional items for discussion and consideration, including:

- Discussion about courthouse security enhancements
- Local government pension contributions to increase
- Chowan County asking to join Bertie-Martin Regional jail partnership
- Discussion about a new shell building in the industrial park

Commissioner Smith commended County Manager Bone on his presentation.

CLOSED SESSIONS

N C G. S. §143-318.11(a) (6) Personnel

At 7:48 p.m., Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to enter closed session, in pursuant of N C G. S. §143-318.11(a) (6) Personnel, with a SECOND from Commissioner Smith. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

At 8:16 p.m., Commissioner Smith made a MOTION to go out of closed session, in pursuant of N C G. S. §143-318.11(a) (6) Personnel, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

No action was taken in open session.

OLD BUSINESS

Lease for Public Defender's Office in Beaufort County

Beaufort County purchased a building for \$226,105 and spent \$47,000 in renovations for a building which now houses the Public Defender's Office. County Manager Bone recalled the status of the lease was discussed at the January 16, 2019 meeting. This item was discussed on January 16th, but no action was taken.

In a February 5, 2019 letter, Beaufort County Manager Brian Alligood suggests the continuation of the inter-local agreement payments as reimbursement for the purchase price / renovation of the building. The purchase / renovation cost would be recouped in 8.6 years, at which time Beaufort County suggests the development of a new inter-local agreement to pay for future maintenance costs. (In the letter, Beaufort County suggests it would absorb any maintenance costs in the 8.6-year period.)

County Manager explained Beaufort County Manager Brian Alligood attended the February 13, 2019 meeting of the Martin County Commissioners. After some discussion about the benefits of the Public Defender's Office and the cooperative effort involved in the inter-local agreement, Mr. Alligood stated Beaufort County would draft an amendment to the agreement to clarify a financial partnership concerning the purchase and renovation of the new Public Defender's Office building.

An Amendment to the Interlocal agreement was drafted and presented. The Amendment included changes drafted by County Manager Brian Alligood, including a definitive timeline for the completion of the agreement amendment, and then it would be renegotiated regarding maintenance costs after the debt service of the building purchase of the Public Defender's office.

Commissioner Smith made a MOTION to approve the Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement (reference by title "Amendment #1 to Interlocal Agreement between the Counties of Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrell, and Washington" (Originally Executed December 3, 2019), with a SECOND from Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Request from the Soil & Water Conservation District to Use Leftover Funds from the Beaver Bounty Program in the Beaver Management Assistance Program

Soil and Water Conservation District Board Chairman Ricky Cannon stated the Soil and Water District had made significant progress with the clearing and snagging work in creeks and waterways in Martin County. Chairman Cannon stated the beaver population continued to cause problems in those same waterways in Martin County.

The increase in beaver population had caused detrimental impacts regarding damage to roads, agriculture and timber lands, drainage systems, landscape plantings, and other property.

Martin County proactively addressed beaver damage through two programs:

- (1) A Beaver Bounty funded with county funds (\$12,000 was appropriated this year in the Cooperative Extension budget; \$7,500 in beaver bounty funds was paid-out in 2017-18; as of March 7th, \$7,050 has been paid-out this year).
- (2) Participation in the USDA / NC Wildlife Beaver Management Assistance Program (BMAP), which has an annual cost share assessment of \$4,000 per county, and

The State beaver season runs from November 1 until March 31. The Martin County Beaver Bounty Program coincided with the State season or until funds are depleted, whichever comes first.

Chairman Cannon was proposing working with USDA Wildlife Management to trap beavers in Martin County. The proposal would involve the Martin County Soil & Water Conservation District contacting landowners to see if they were willing to share the cost of having USDA come in and trap beavers, to supplement the Beaver Bounty program in Martin County in order to trap as many beavers and destroy as many dams as possible.

When beaver damage was intolerable, wildlife specialists alleviated the damage by removing the offending animals and their dams using humane and environmentally acceptable methods or by using pond levelers, exclusion, or other non-lethal techniques.

Participants in the BMAP program would pay a small cost-share fee for services. This cost-share fee was \$20 for each visit to their property. There was no charges for travel time. There was also a \$150 charge for dam removal. Wildlife specialists averaged about 10 visits over a 30-day period to resolve a beaver problem. After 15 visits to a landholder's property in any one year, costs increased. There was no charge for the initial assessment, which included time spent discussing the program and signing paperwork. During this assessment, the wildlife specialist discussed with the landholder the positive and negative impacts of beaver and recommends the best course of action.

Chairman Cannon and District Conservationist Whitehurst also discussed with the Board of Commissioners the possibility of using leftover funds from the Beaver Bounty Program to pay for trapping through the USDA BMAP program. This could help improve the main drainage canals in the county. The main focus of the current request was support from the Board of Commissioners for Chairman Cannon and District Conservationist Whitehurst to proceed with conversations with USDA regarding additional beaver trapping in Martin County.

Sheriff Tim Manning stated he supported the proposal, as the Sheriff's office had received numerous reports regarding beavers being trapped outside of Martin County but turned in to Martin County for payment, and this would keep the funds true to Martin County.

Chairman Cannon stated Conservationist Whitehurst had been in discussion with the Martin County Finance office regarding handling the payments and other transactions because the Soil and Water District office would not be equipped for that.

Commissioner Smith stated he supported the efforts. Commissioner Smith stated the beaver population in Martin County was definitely a problem, and the concept being looked at with the USDA would better handle the problems with dams in the streams, benefiting more people and better handling the problems in the streams. District Conservationist Whitehurst stated that the USDA would be accountable for the work being done in the waterways, ensuring the problem would be better handled.

County Manager David Bone stated this was a great concept to be able to better handle the beaver problem. County Manager Bone recalled the current budget and remaining funds in the beaver bounty program, stating the remaining balance was \$2,950 with a couple of weeks left in beaver season. County Manager Bone further stated the USDA and BMAP programs typically work with the property owners directly. If the USDA was not willing to do that in this situation, collection may be a challenge in certain instances. County Manager Bone stated any efforts for collections and contacting landowners should be directed to the County Manager's office and not the Finance Office; he would collaborate with Mr. Whitehurst and any other staff in those efforts.

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to approve the use of excess funds from Beaver Bounty program to work with the USDA to expand the BMAP program and to work with property owners to take care of excess beavers, with a SECOND from Commissioner Smith. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Mr. Cannon wanted to make the Board aware that the program would be strictly voluntary for landowners.

Chairman Bowen announced that Commissioner Smith had to leave early due to another commitment. Commissioner Smith left the meeting excused at 8:36 p.m.

FY 2018 Martin County CDBG-NR Grant Agreement and Funding Approval

The NC Department of Commerce's CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Grant Program (also known as CDBG-NR) provides funding for housing improvements for owner occupied low-moderate income homeowners and infrastructure activities which support these housing activities. Other activities can include improvements such as access for the disabled to facilities, senior center, housing for homeless persons, housing or shelters for victims of domestic violence, transitional housing, community facilities, neighborhood facilities, and recreational facilities such as parks, playgrounds & greenways; however, the main thrust of the application must be housing improvements.

The program would not require a local match (but may receive additional points for local contributions) and requires two public hearings.

The Board of Commissioners held the first of two required public hearings on this item on September 12, 2018. The purpose of the first public hearing was to explain the CDBG program and allow the citizens of Martin County an opportunity to express their views concerning community development needs and priorities.

A second public hearing was held on September 26, 2018. The purpose of the second hearing was to explain the proposed program to the public.

The Martin County CDBG-NR grant application involved the following:

1. Utilization of the database of existing applicants from the County's housing programs.
2. Determination of which of the units can be considered as dilapidated or it probably would take more money to fix the house than the value of the house with a reasonable size lot.
3. Using McDavid housing inspectors to review the units and demographics to develop information to provide to a Housing Selection Committee of a minimum of 3 members to be selected by the County Manager.
4. Having the Committee select homes to include in the application for assistance. The homes would need to be owner occupied Low-Moderate Income (LMI) homes, and the replacement homes must be real property.

At the September 26, 2018 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved a local match of \$8,000 for the grant.

The preliminary homes included in the final application were as follows:

- Rosa Lee Williams – 2680 Cannon Road, Hobgood, NC 27843
- Herbert Barnes – 303 North South Street, Hamilton, NC 27840
- Pam Andrews – 1587 Ross Road, Robersonville, NC 27871
- Gwendolyn Hyman – 1351 N. Main Street, Robersonville, NC 27871
- Alternate: Ann Beckwith – 105 S Railroad Street, Hamilton, NC 27840

The County would complete ownership and other evaluations to insure clear titles prior to any action by the program.

Martin County recently received a \$750,000 grant award notice from the CDBG-NR program. The program would pay for housing improvements for owner occupied low-moderate income homeowners and infrastructure activities which support these housing activities.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to accept the CDBG-NR grant and authorize the Chairman to sign the Grant Agreement Package, with a SECOND by Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to approve the attached budget for the CDBG-NR program, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to authorize the Manager to approve and execute contracts for Program Management and Housing services needed to manage the CDBG-NR program, with a SECOND by Commissioner Ayers. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Pursuit of a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant to Help Develop a Horse Trail

The NC Recreational Trail Program (RTP) provides grants for sustainable, “shovel-ready” projects to meet recreational trail needs in an effort to provide low infrastructure economic development opportunities through natural resource tourism. \$1.49 million was allocated for NC last year.

The RTP program was one of the grant sources for the Moratoc Park renovation project.

County Manager Bone said the development of a nature trail could provide an educational benefit and provide an opportunity for collaboration between the NC Forestry Service, Martin County Cooperative Extension, Martin County Soil and Water Conservation and other partners. The Forest Service would also like an area to exercise their heavy equipment occasionally.

County Manager Bone explained the development of a horse trail could provide another tourism asset. Additionally, given the tract's close proximity (located across Kehukee Park Road) to Martin Community College and its renowned Equine Training Technology and Equine Business Training Technology Academic Programs, a system of equine trails and facilities would be a valuable asset for Martin Community College.

The RTP grant program was identified as a potential funding source for the horse trail. The RTP grant application was a two-stage process: the pre-application and the final application. The maximum grant award was \$100,000. A 25% local match would be required. The pre-application requested general information and scope of the project. The application deadline for the pre-application was March 15, 2019. The final application required more technical and in-depth verification of the project's status. The final application deadline was August 2, 2019.

At its February 13, 2019 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved a budget amendment to pay David Hodges for consulting services to help develop the grant application.

If Martin County received a grant, trailhead facilities were planned to be constructed via upgrades to the USDA-Agricultural Service Center and Public Works Maintenance facility and parking areas. Approximately 3-5 miles of new Equine trails would be constructed beginning at this trailhead and connecting to the Martin Community College Equine facilities. The addition of a cross-country training field was planned to offer additional equine exercise opportunities. The site is presently being evaluated by the USACE to conduct a Jurisdictional Wetlands Determination, which would provide guidance to support future considerations of these plan designs.

Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to proceed with the pre-application, as well as giving County Manager Bone the authority to submit a commitment letter regarding the 25% match should the grant be received. Vice Chairman Bond SECONDED. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Employee Benefits Broker Services

County Manager Bone stated Martin County recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Benefits Broker Services.

The goal of the RFP for Benefits Broker Services was to solicit offers from qualified brokers to assist the County with strategically planning, designing and negotiating the best coverage and cost for selective employee benefit programs. The County was constantly competing to recruit and retain the best employees possible. The County was looking to ensure we have financially competitive and affordable benefit programs to offer our employees.

Martin County was providing a comprehensive benefits program for its employees including:

- Medical Insurance – provided by the State Health Plan for current employees
- Dental Insurance

Optional Benefits with no employer contribution include:

- Vision Insurance
- Accident Insurance
- Cancer Insurance
- Hospital Indemnity Plan
- Critical Illness Insurance
- Short-term Disability Insurance
- Term Life Insurance
- Whole Life Insurance

Sealed RFP proposals were accepted until March 1, 2019. Any contract resulting from this proposal would be effective upon full execution of the agreement for the benefits plan year beginning July 1, 2019.

County Manager Bone stated six responses were received from the RFP process. Two of the top companies that responded to the RFP were Mark III and Pierce Group Benefits. Mark III was the current benefits broker and rated slightly above Pierce Group Benefits. Pierce Group provided services for the majority of school systems in NC as well as many Cities and Counties. Mark III was serving 33-35 counties in North Carolina. County Bone stated it was the staff's recommendation to continue Martin County's benefits broker services with Mark III.

Finance Director Cindy Ange stated there were a lot of good proposals, but Mark III just stood out above the rest.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to continue Martin County's benefits broker services with Mark III, with a SECOND from Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Resolution Declaring March 24-30, 2019 to Be Small Farms Week

Martin County Cooperative Extension Director Laura Oliver explained each year, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University celebrates small-scale agriculture during their

“Small Farms Week”. The 33rd annual Small Farms Week would be held March 24-30, 2019. Director Oliver stated during the week of March 24-30, 2019, the Martin County Cooperative Extension office would be hosting a social media campaign, publish articles in the newspaper and host a food drive in honor of Small Farms week appreciation.

Director Oliver stated more than 80% of the 52,000 farming operations in NC are considered small. Small farms make a major contribution to the state’s \$84 billion agriculture industry. In addition, these farms support public health by providing fresh, local food, and help to protect the environment through careful stewardship of natural resources. Director Oliver reinforced the importance of agriculture in Martin County.

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to adopt the Resolution declaring “Small Farms Week” in Martin County March 24-30, 2019, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

**RESOLUTION BY THE MARTIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DECLARING MARCH 24-30, 2019
“SMALL FARMS WEEK”**

WHEREAS, Small Farms Week is an annual tribute to small-scale agriculture by North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University; and

WHEREAS, Small Farms Week kicks off March 25, 2019 with the theme “Deep Roots, Bright Future”; and

WHEREAS, Small farms make a major contribution to the North Carolina’s \$84 billion agriculture industry; and

WHEREAS, Small farms in North Carolina support public health by providing fresh, local food, and help protect the environment through their careful stewardship of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, Small farms and agriculture are vital to the economy and well-being for many citizens of Martin County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Martin County Board of Commissioners do hereby declare March 24-30, 2019 to be “Small Farms Week” in Martin County.

Adopted this 13th day of March, 2019.

Resolution Declaring March 2019 Social Work Month

County Manager Bone stated National Professional Social Work Month in March 2019 was an opportunity for social workers around the nation and world and their supporters to educate the public about the invaluable contributions of the profession. County Manager Bone recalled a similar resolution was passed by the Board of Commissioners in March 2018.

Every day, the nation's 680,000 social workers work to empower and elevate millions of people, including some of the most vulnerable in our society.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to adopt the Resolution declaring March 2019 Social Work Month, with a SECOND from Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

**RESOLUTION
DECLARING MARCH 2019 SOCIAL WORK MONTH**

WHEREAS, the Social Work Profession is dedicated to enhancing well-being and helping meet the basic needs of all people, especially those who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, this year's Social Work Month theme, "Elevate Social Work" embodies the need to recognize the extraordinary contributions of the profession to our society; and

WHEREAS, the Social Work profession is expected to grow faster than average over the next seven years, with more than 682,000 people expected to be employed as social workers by 2026; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers elevate and empower people, giving them the ability to solve problems, cope with personal roadblocks and get the resources they need to succeed; and

WHEREAS, the Social Work profession is deeply weaved into our society with social workers active in government, schools, universities, social service agencies, communities, corporations, the military and in health care and mental health care settings; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers are the largest group of providers of mental health services in the United States and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is one of the largest employers of social workers holding advanced degrees; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers for decades have been in the forefront on social justice, pushing for equal rights for women, African Americans, Latinos, people who are disabled, people who are LGBTQ and various ethnic, cultural and religious groups; and

WHEREAS, the Social Work Profession for more than a century has been on the cutting edge of helping create changes to make our society a better place to live, including voting rights, improved workplace safety, a minimum wage and social safety net programs that ameliorate poverty and hunger; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers stand ready to help our society overcome current pressing issues, including equal rights for all, the need for improved availability of health care and mental health services; immigration reform; voting rights and the environmental impact of global warming.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Martin County Board of Commissioners do hereby declare the month of March 2019 as National Social Work Month and call upon all citizens to join the National Association of Social Workers and Martin County Board of Commissioners in celebration and support of the Social Work Profession.

Adopted this 13th day of March, 2019

Resolution Requesting Relief from US Army Corps of Engineers in Management of the John H. Kerr Dam

County Manager Bone recalled the US Army Corps of Engineers had been releasing 35,000 cfs of water from the John H. Kerr Dam for extended periods, which had flooded agricultural and timber fields, roads and homes in Washington, Martin, Bertie, Northampton and Halifax Counties. This flooding caused the financial loss of millions of dollars in agricultural, timber and property losses. The duration of this flooding caused further economic loss to our tourism-related businesses, due to the dangerous navigational conditions, which discouraged sport fishing, kayaking and camping.

County Manager Bone spoke about a regional meeting that was hosted by Bertie County on February 21st, 2019 for surrounding counties on behalf of Senator Erica Smith. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the Kerr Dam releases that have impacted flooding on the Roanoke River. There was a very large crowd, and Martin County was well represented. There was a good mix of government leaders, farmers and other stakeholders present to discuss their concern. A follow-up meeting is expected later this spring.

Additionally, in meetings with the congressional delegation and their staff during the recent National Association of Counties Legislative Conference, it was suggested that the Martin County Board of Commissioners pass a resolution requesting relief from the US Army Corps of Engineers to further substantiate and document our community's concern about the flooding that resulted from the 35,000 cfs release from the dam.

Staff drafted a resolution, which requested that the US Army Corps of Engineers immediately provides relief to the property owners along the Roanoke River in Washington, Martin, Bertie, Northampton and Halifax Counties by limiting the duration of the 35,000 cfs releases from the John H. Kerr Dam and expeditiously review its Water Supply Plan in consideration of the current plan's effect on these property owners.

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to adopt the Resolution Requesting Relief from US Army Corps of Engineers in Management of the John H. Kerr Dam, with a SECOND from Commissioner Ayers. Commissioner Lilley inquired about the actual level of water in the reservoir lake. Commissioner Lilley further stated everything south of the lake had been flooded. Commissioner Lilley felt the flooding was man-made. Soil and Water Conservation District Board Chairman Ricky Cannon stated the gentleman that spoke at the meeting regarding the flooding was very educated on the subject but the information was not received well from the Army Corps of Engineers. Chairman Cannon stated his Board would write a letter of support if needed for this resolution. After all discussion completed, the Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

RESOLUTION REQUESTING RELIEF FROM US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN MANAGEMENT OF THE JOHN H. KERR DAM

WHEREAS, the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir Project (originally Buggs Island Reservoir) was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1944 for the purpose of flood control, hydropower generation, recreation, low flow augmentation, "and other uses" as part of the comprehensive development of the Roanoke River Basin in Virginia and North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the John H. Kerr Reservoir is managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS, the US Army Corps of Engineers conducted a Section 216 feasibility study to review the operations of the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir to determine the advisability of modifying operations for the purpose of improving the quality of the environment in the overall public interest; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the Section 216 feasibility study, the US Army Corps of Engineers updated its Water Supply Plan (which outlines its policies to manage Kerr Reservoir) in 2016 and changed its duration and timing of flows from the John H. Kerr Dam; and

WHEREAS, this operational change (referred to as the Quasi Run of River Operational Change) allows the weekly volume of release from the Roanoke Rapids Dam up to 35,000 cfs; and

WHEREAS, the US Army Corps of Engineers has been releasing 35,000 cfs of water from the John H. Kerr Dam for extended periods, which has flooded agricultural and timber fields, roads and homes in Washington, Martin, Bertie, Northampton and Halifax Counties; and

WHEREAS, flooding in these counties has increased in frequency and severity since the US Army Corps of Engineers' 2016 changes to its Water Supply Plan; and

WHEREAS, this flooding has caused the financial loss of millions of dollars in agricultural, timber and property losses; and

WHEREAS, the duration of this flooding has caused further economic loss to our tourism-related businesses, due to the dangerous navigational conditions, which discourages sport fishing, kayaking and camping;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Martin County Board of Commissioners hereby request that the US Army Corps of Engineers immediately provides relief to the property owners along the Roanoke River in Washington, Martin, Bertie, Northampton and Halifax Counties by limiting the duration of the 35,000 cfs releases from the John H. Kerr Dam and expeditiously review its Water Supply Plan in consideration of the current plan's effect on these property owners.

Adopted this the 13th day of February, 2019.

Budget Amendment(s)

Budget Amendment #24

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated in September 2017, the Martin County Board of Commissioners approved a budget amendment to fund testing and analysis of the water treated by Martin County Regional Water and Sewer Authority. Finance Officer Ange stated that project took longer than expected, and the funds were not fully expended at year end. This amendment would re-appropriate the remaining funds for this project.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to approve Budget Amendment #24, with a SECOND from Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Budget Amendment #25

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated a Martin County deputy was involved in an accident on December 17, 2018. The deputy was not at fault. The County's vehicle was totaled. The County's insurance had paid \$15,984.50 for the vehicle and \$7,984.82 for the equipment inside the vehicle.

Budget Amendment #25 increases the Sheriff's budget by the amount of the claim in order for the department to purchase a new vehicle.

Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to approve Budget Amendment #25, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Budget Amendments #26 & #27

On March 14, 2018, the Board of Commissioners approved the submission of a Rural ReadySites pre-application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce in the amount of \$1,126,600 for expansion of the gravity sewer system and the rehabilitation of the existing elevated storage tank at the Martin County Regional Business Park. The request was for \$1,013,940 in grant funds to be accompanied by a County match of \$112,660. The pre-application was submitted to NC Commerce on April 6, 2018.

On June 22, 2018 the Department of Commerce announced that Martin County was one of 10 grant pre-applications approved for funding. On October 10, 2018, the Board of Commissioners approved submittal of a full application to the ReadySite program.

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated Budget amendment #26 provided the budget for the grant project. Budget amendment #27 provided the match from the General Fund to the project.

Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to approve Budget Amendment #26 and #27, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Budget Amendment #28

The N.C. Department of Transportation planned to upgrade Racetrack Road and Holly Springs Church Road. Martin County had utility lines that will have to be replaced due to these projects.

Engineering plans will be required. NCDOT provided the option of allowing their contract engineers to provide this service, or Martin County could have its engineering consultants provide the service, and NCDOT will reimburse Martin County for the engineering services.

Martin County informed NCDOT that it wanted The Wooten Company to perform this work. The Wooten Company had to prepare an estimate to provide NCDOT a reasonable basis for analysis. NCDOT then had to approve The Wooten Company's estimate and scope of work, which it has.

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated Budget amendment #28 would allow for the funds being received by NCDOT to be paid to The Wooten Company.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to approve Budget Amendment #28, with a SECOND from Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS / COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Ayers asked if there had been any discussion in while in Washington D.C. about the possible of water debt relief. County Manager Bone stated there was some good discussion. Having had a direct conversation with Representative Butterfield, he offered some ideas on how to pursue the issue on the federal level. County Manager Bone stated the County was still proceeding with conversations on the state level. County Manager Bone stated there were productive conversations but no guarantees could be made regarding definitive information.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Bond made the MOTION to adjourn at around 8:57 p.m., with a SECOND by Commissioner Lilley. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

The Martin County Board of Commissioners' next regular meeting would be Wednesday, April 10th, 2019 at 7:00 p.m., in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

Tommy Bowen, Chairman

Jessica Godard
Clerk to the Board