**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA NOVEMBER 16, 2015**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, November 16, 2015 in Courtroom C in the Pasquotank County Courthouse.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Chairman

 Cecil Perry, Vice-Chairman

 Jeff Dixon

 Lloyd E. Griffin, III

 Dr. William R. Sterritt

 Frankie Meads

 Bettie J. Parker

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rodney Bunch, County Manager

R. Michael Cox, County Attorney

 Shelley Cox, Planning Director

 Lynn Scott, Clerk to the Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Joe Winslow. Commissioner Lloyd Griffin gave the invocation and Bobby Harris, a UNC Environmental Science Student led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Chairman Winslow welcomed everyone attending tonight’s meeting.

**1. PRESENTATION OF SWANA CERTIFICATION:**

Scott Bost, of the Solid Waste Association of North Carolina presented Solid Waste Director Michael Etheridge the Certified Manager of Integrated Solid Waste Management Systems Certification. He noted that Mr. Etheridge is only one of nine people in the State to hold the national certification by SWANA. He praised Mr. Etheridge for his work on the SWANA Board and his dedication to the profession. The Board congratulated Mr. Etheridge on the certification and thanked him for his hard work and dedication to Pasquotank County.

**2. PRESENATION OF ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF SEA LEVEL RISE IN PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NC**

UNC Chapel Hill environmental science students Bobby Harris, Molly Fisher, Neil Sullivan, Radha Patel, and Cassy Karlsson, led by Professor David Salvesen, participated in a Capstone research project to assess the county’s vulnerability to sea level rise and developed potential mitigation strategies. The students presented their findings to the Board. Bobby Harris explained that their findings and recommendations are based on reviews of international, federal and state scientific data and consultations with city and county officials, including Planning Director Shelley Cox and Emergency Management Director Christy Saunders.

The team explained that as a low lying coastal county in northeastern North Carolina, Pasquotank County faces possible impacts of sea level rise over the next century and beyond. Sea level rise could potentially threaten the livelihood and homes of many Pasquotank County residents.

Over the past century, North Carolina has seen sea levels rise about one foot. The rate of sea level rise in the past two decades is nearly double that of the past century, and this rate is only expected to increase. Based on projections from several authoritative sources, the county should expect one foot sea level rise by 2050, two feet by 2060 to 2080, and three to four feet by 2100. The southern part of the county is the lowest elevation and will be the first area to be permanently submerged due to sea level rise. By 2050, only small sections of the county will be submerged, however, as sea level rises more than one foot beyond 2050, much greater portions of the county will be inundated. Particular at-risk areas include downtown Elizabeth City, Bray’s Estates, Matthews Acres and Glen Cove. The county can expect to lose about $51 million in property value by 2050 and at least $270 million by 2100 due solely to rising water levels. Several miles of roads will be submerged and people will be displaced from their homes.

Additionally, the likelihood of flooding will increase significantly. A flood that has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year today could have anywhere from a five percent to a fifty percent chance of occurring in any given year by 2050. About half of the county’s land area could be within the one-hundred year floodplain by 2050. This heightened risk of flooding will endanger property owners in designated flood zones and other flood prone areas throughout the county. Not only will the likelihood of flooding increase, the height of floodwaters is expected to rise, as well.

In conclusion, the team said they developed an array of mitigation strategies ranging from policy options to communication efforts to physical projects. The goal of these strategies is to reduce the county’s risks of increased flooding and other effects of sea level rise. Certain examples include limiting development in the most vulnerable areas, preserving natural buffers, building community awareness, and protecting critical infrastructure. Their key policy proposal is that the county participates in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS awards points to the county for implementing various flood awareness and prevention strategies. By participating in the CRS and achieving a minimum number of points, the county can save homeowners with flood insurance up to ten percent on their insurance premiums, for significant countywide savings. Specifically, they believe the county can easily reach Class 9 standing, which will result in a five percent premium reduction amounting to a savings of $36,000 per year. By implementing additional efforts over the course of a few years, the county can move up to a Class 8 designation, under which flood insurance policyholders will receive a ten percent premium reduction. This would amount to a savings of $72,000 per year. More importantly, however, the measures implemented as a part of CRS will help mitigate against the threat of sea level rise. In other words, the CRS actually provides an incentive for the county to adopt measures to mitigate against the possible effects of sea level rise.

After discussion, the Board thanked the students for the information they provided.

**3.** **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

*a. Approval of Minutes of November 2 and November 9, 2015 Commissioner Meetings*

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Cecil Perry to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

**4. CONSIDERATION FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT TO SENATOR RICHARD BURR FOR S 1775 WW II MERCHANT MARINERS SERVICE ACT:**

The Board considered a request from Mr. Don Horton to send a letter to Senator Burr reaffirming support of the previously adopted resolution supporting an alternative method of recognition for Veterans status to WW II Coastwise Merchant Mariners. County Manager Bunch explained that Senator Burr sent a letter to Chairman Winslow in response to the resolution thanking the Board for supporting legislation that would no longer require specific military documentation to prove an individual’s service as a Merchant Mariner, specifically those who participated in coastwise service during WW II. Senator Burr stated in the letter that it is very rare that an individual submitting documentation to receive veteran status would not have sufficient military documentation to receive veteran status, as is required by law. He said a legislative change to the current law would allow individuals to provide non-military records in order to receive veteran status and given the new precedent this legislation would set, it is an issue that the Senate Veteran’s Affairs Committee must carefully consider.

Discussion followed and the Board expressed their desire for Mr. Horton to attend a meeting in order to address their unanswered questions.

Motion was made by Cecil Perry, seconded by Lloyd Griffin that this item be tabled until the next meeting due to questions that the Board would like answered by Mr. Horton.

**5.** **REPORT FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER:**

County Manager Rodney Bunch reported that Chairman Winslow requested the Board meet with the Camden County Board of Commissioners on January 9, 2016. Mr. Bunch was instructed to schedule a meeting between the chairmen and managers to discuss potential topics and see if a meeting is warranted.

Mr. Bunch reported that he received an e-mail today from the State Health Plan informing him they are in the process of assigning a representative to the county, as well as providing the county with an identification number so that we can begin preparations for enrolling employees in December. Mr. Bunch stated that he and Sheri Small met with Frank Heath, Jerry Parks, and Battle Betts to discuss supplemental insurances and how to move forward. He said they are working with Worksite Resources, which is a company the health department has worked with for years.

Mr. Bunch said the Building Inspections Department is very busy and are a day or so behind on inspections, therefore, the Board and staff may be receiving calls.

Mr. Bunch said he had previously reported that the publisher for the *County Compass* had accepted an invitation to attend to the Solid Waste/Landfill Committee meeting on Wednesday, but he called today stating he will not be able to attend due to a dental procedure.

**6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner William Sterritt invited the Board and staff to the Annual DSS Thanksgiving Breakfast on Wednesday.

Commissioner Frankie Meads reported that he spoke with a third commissioner from Chowan County regarding district attorney office space. He suggested the County Manager, the District Attorney and himself attend an upcoming meeting of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Bettie Parker reported on the Building & Grounds Committee meeting. She said she met with the Northern Regional Advisory Board on November 10th.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin reported that the 1st round of the hospital closure audit is complete. He provided an update on offshore oil drilling.

Vice-Chairman Cecil Perry reported that he attended a meeting at Elizabeth City State University regarding potential curriculum changes. He said he met with Mr. Taylor regarding the status of his request to reduce the speed limit on Trinkaloe Road. Mr. Bunch stated he will follow-up on the letter he sent to the Department of Transportation previously.

Chairman Winslow said he contacted Sentara Albemarle Medical Center regarding concerns mentioned at the last meeting about the hospital’s billing procedures. He stated that he received a letter assuring him that they are addressing the problem.

Chairman Winslow reported that he attended the meeting at Elizabeth State University regarding potential curriculum changes that Vice-Chairman Perry reported on and said it was a very positive meeting.

Chairman Winslow 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 Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Cecil Perry to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

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 CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO THE BOARD