

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**October 16, 2014**  
**Public Hearing**  
**Solid Waste and Recycling Convenience Centers**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 10:00AM in the Commissioners Room located at 106 Dundee Street Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: J. Wallace Perry, Chairman  
Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman  
Rick Harrell  
John Trent  
Ronald "Ron" Wesson

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
County Attorney Lloyd Smith  
Sheriff John Holley  
Planning Director Traci White

Media members present included Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald, and Barry Ward of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Trent gave the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**OPENING REMARKS**

Chairman Perry welcomed all of those present, and thanked everyone for their attendance at tonight's hearing.

Mr. Perry gave the following opening remarks:

Good evening, everyone. Last year on October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Commissioners held a public hearing in this courtroom about the curbside trash and recycling proposal.

Many of you were here for that meeting, and we want to thank you for participating in tonight's meeting.

Last year the Board decided to defer any decision on the proposed curbside service, and the Board agreed to extend the current contract with Waste Industries until June 30, 2015.

The annual cost for the 5 convenience centers is \$491,000 and is paid from the General Fund, which is supported primarily by your tax dollars. This cost is to provide for the operation of the convenience centers and the transportation of our solid waste and recyclables to the landfill. Bertie County residents are not charged for disposal at the landfill which was negotiated almost twenty years ago when the landfill was located in our County.

During our budget meetings this spring, there was a brief discussion about extending the convenience center contract, but there was practically no one in the audience to hear our deliberations. So it was agreed that no action should be taken at that time.

Later this summer, Waste Industries presented the County with a proposal to extend our current contract for the convenience centers through June of 2020—which is almost six years from now.

Bertie County approved a binding five year contract in 2001, and also in 2006. The proposed contract extension will be a binding contract for the convenience centers until June 30 2020.

At our first meeting in September the Board voted to hold a public hearing on the matter, and we are here this evening to listen to you.

Last year our topic was the proposed curbside service, and we heard comments for and against it. We also listened to comments about the current operations at our convenience centers.

Tonight our topic is the contract extension with Waste Industries and the continued operation of the County's convenience centers. And again, we welcome your comments.

At our last Board meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>, we heard from Republic Services Inc., which is the company operating the regional landfill here in Bertie County. They too, have expressed an interest in providing convenience center services.

At the last meeting, the Board voted to accept competing proposals for the operation of convenience centers, as we consider the contract extension proposal from Waste Industries. Proposals are due on November 6<sup>th</sup>. This Board will make a decision after that date.

We are not here this evening to review the contract. It is posted on the County's website and available for everyone to read. There are also copies of the current contract available for you tonight.

We are here tonight to listen. We want your comments and we welcome your opinion as the Board considers the proposed extension for our convenience centers which have been in operation since 2001.

There are sign-up sheets for the speakers, and I will take each sheet individually so that I can recognize you in the order that you signed up. So, if you didn't have a chance to sign on the first sheet, there will be another one available.

Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes and our county attorney, Lloyd Smith will be our time keeper.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Perry opened the floor to public comments using the designated sign in sheet.

Willie G. Bazemore of the Republican Community stated that he was against the proposed curbside solid waste and recycling program as it would be an additional cost to taxpayers while the convenience sites are currently free of charge for Bertie County residents.

Brenda Cowand of Merry Hill showed concern regarding the size of the potential curbside garbage trucks, and stated that she did not believe they belonged in a rural setting. She also commended Vice Chairman Smith for his honesty that was displayed in his editorial in a recent Bertie Ledger-Advance. She also stated that she “agreed 100%” with Mr. Smith.

Joe Hoggard of San Souci stated that the public was supposed to “speak,” and that the Commissioners were supposed to “listen.” Mr. Hoggard reiterated that he knew the Commissioners knew where he stood on this issue, and that he appreciated the current convenience sites as he is able to drop off trash at any time. He stated that a curbside program would be more inconvenient as trash and recycling would only be collected on one day.

Norman Cherry of Lewiston-Woodville stated that he was for the convenience sites, and that he was able to drop off trash at his convenience. He also commended Mr. Smith for his contribution to a recent edition of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Diane P. Kimbrough of Lewiston-Woodville stated that she was in favor of the current convenience sites.

Francis Byrum of Windsor thanked the Board for this opportunity for the public to speak on this matter. She stated that she appreciated Vice Chairman Smith’s words in the Bertie Ledger-Advance. Ms. Byrum also showed concern for the cleanliness of the County, and that the County is the cleanest it has ever been. She feared that if the convenience sites were to be discontinued that the beauty of the County would suffer due to excessive littering and dumping.

Norma Yanez, a representative of Waste Industries, thanked the Board as well as the citizens for allowing Waste Industries to provide the conveniences sites, and that Waste Industries does wish to continue the operation of the convenience sites.

Will Outlaw of Windsor recommended that the Board look to increase revenue in the County elsewhere by recruiting more big businesses such a Wal-Mart, or another grocery store, to assist with revenue as well as job creation.

Shelby Castelloe of the Bertie County Farm Bureau stated that he supported the current convenience sites, and that if a citizen was interested in curbside they could always hire a local company to provide them with that service.

Stewart White of Colerain thanked the Board for allowing this public hearing to take place, and complimented Vice Chairman Smith on the write up he provided to the Bertie Ledger-Advance. Mr. White continued by thanking Vice Chairman Smith and Chairman Perry for their many years of service. Mr. White concluded by stating that he highly encouraged the Board to continue to support the current convenience sites.

Wade Perry of Midway stated that adding anymore fees on top of current taxes was “too much,” and that he was impressed with the neatness of the current convenience sites. He stated that he was in agreement with the rest of the citizens present regarding the continuation of the convenience sites.

Lucille Phelps stated that she disagreed with Commissioner Wesson regarding the effectiveness of a curbside program, and that her main concern is “keeping our County clean.” She stated that she has stopped and picked up illegally dumped trash bags on the side of the road, and has delivered them to an appropriate convenience site. She stated that the convenience sites are the best solution to keeping the County clean. She also thanked Vice Chairman Smith for his words in the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Larry Taylor thanked the Board for providing the public the opportunity to speak tonight, and stated his concern about the once a month frequency of trash trucks being able to pick up larger items such as washing machines, televisions, etc. He stated that after he recently replaced a washing machine that if there were a curbside pick up program in place, he would have to wait for the appropriate day to haul out the washing machine to the curb for pick up. He stated that he was glad he did not have to wait to discard of such items now at the convenience sites anytime during operational hours.

Garry Terry thanked everyone who had already spoken, and stated that curbside pick-up shouldn't be a mandated service.

Barbara Outlaw of Powellsville thanked Mr. Smith for his article in the Bertie Ledger-Advance, inquired about the current land fill and the possibility of it closing. She asked about what would happen in the event of its closing.

George Copeland stated that he did not feel the need to speak as his thoughts had already been expressed by others present.

John Davis of Merry Hill stated that according to his research, the matter of curbside trash pick-up was “dead,” and that the matter had died earlier this year. He stated that he understood what the Board was trying to do in looking to cut spending during the sequester, but that there was currently no motions for consideration on the table at this time to adopt a curbside trash and recycling pick-up program. He stated that the previous public hearing “worked,” and that “the Board heard you [the citizens].”

Kathy Myers of Merry Hill responded to Mr. Davis' comment stating that the curbside trash pick-up idea was “dead,” and stated that if that fact were known then some of the folks present would not feel the need to be here tonight. Ms. Myers stated that she was not in favor of a

curbside trash pick-up program as it would shift the cost from the County to the citizens. She stated that she was also skeptical of the methods used to explain the cost of the potential curbside program, and that she felt this matter should be put to a voter referendum.

Terry Pratt of Merry Hill stated that he had already made his opinions known, and that he is in favor of the current convenience sites, but that anyone who was in favor of curbside could hire a company to provide that elective service for them. He also thanked the Commissioners for continuing to open each of their meetings with a prayer as this process is being eliminated in other counties.

Milton Felton of Colerain stated that he would still need to go to the landfill if curbside trash pick-up were in place. Mr. Felton expressed concerns about the many citizens in the County that could not afford another bill, and that Vice Chairman Smith should have written his letter to the Bertie Ledger-Advance before the primary election.

Rev. Gary Cordon expressed his thanks to the Board for allowing this public forum to take place, and that he supported the decision of the Board to release requests for proposals (RFP) to other companies in the area so that the County can find the best possible deal for the operation of the convenience sites. He also recommended that the Board consider opening more convenience sites in the future. Lastly, he stated that he hoped the Board would continue to keep the lines of communication open between the Board and the citizens.

Monica Lassiter of Lewiston-Woodville stated that she was tired of hearing about curbside, and asked why citizens were still mentioning it. She stated that the Board was "misleading people," even though the citizens had put their trust in the Board upon their elections.

A citizen interjected by asking about an excerpt in the October 15, 2014 issue of the Bertie Ledger-Advance stating that the entry in the Community section mentioned this public hearing being held in regards to a curbside solid waste and recycling pick-up program.

Chairman Perry asked County Manager Sauer to speak on this matter.

County Manager Sauer approached the podium, and read the paid advertisement that was sent to both the Bertie Ledger-Advance and the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald. The ad reads as follows:

***NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS***

*The Bertie County Board of Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing to discuss and receive citizen comments regarding a proposed contract extension for the operation of the current solid waste and recycling convenience sites.*

*The Public Hearing will be held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Courtroom of the Bertie County Courthouse located at 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC on **Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.***

*If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Clerk to the Board, Sarah S. Tinkham, by phone at (252) 794-6110, or via email at [sarah.tinkham@bertie.nc.gov](mailto:sarah.tinkham@bertie.nc.gov).*

Mr. Sauer also responded to the confusion about the Community section in the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He stated that the County cannot control what the newspaper places into that section, but that the true purpose of tonight's public hearing was announced via paid advertisements in both publications on various dates.

Additionally, Chairman Perry requested that all of those present in favor of the continuation of the convenience sites to "raise their hands."

In response, the overall majority of citizens in the room were in favor of the continuation of the convenience sites.

After some additional discussion, Chairman Perry, Vice Chairman Smith, and Commissioner Harrell were all asked to stand, and be recognized for their many years of service to the County.

The outgoing Board members received a standing ovation.

Chairman Perry officially closed the public hearing.

**ADJOURN**

Chairman Perry adjourned the meeting at 8:22pm.

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J. Wallace Perry, Chairman

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Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board