February 7, 2011

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 7, 2011 in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Bladen County Courthouse.

The following members were present:
Charles Ray Peterson, Chairperson
James G. "Jimmie" Smith, Vice Chairperson
Russell Priest
Delilah Blanks
Daniel Dowless
Mark Gillespie
David Gooden
Lewis Tatum
Billy Ray Pait

Attorney: Leslie Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Gooden provided the Invocation and County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 1. **Consent Items:**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board approved the following consent items:

A. Agenda

B. Minutes of January 18, 2010 (Regular Meeting)
Minutes of January 24, 2011 (Special Meeting)

C. County Attorney Invoice(s):

1-13-2011	$1,375.00	Pay Classification review
1-20-2011	$ 350.00	Sales/Purchase Agreement – Water District
1-24-2011	$ 675.00	Personnel review
2-01-2011	$ 510.00	BARTS Policies review
2-03-2011	$ 300.00	Retainer for the month of February
	$3,210.00	

D. Attorney Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein Invoice:
10-31-2010 $9,604.05 Client - Bladen County Hospital

E. Budget Amendments as follows:

Department and Account Number	Account Description	Increase	Decrease
DSS			
Expenditures			
146100.688	Crisis Intervention	$ 62,321.00	
Revenues			
143531.220	Crisis Intervention	$ 62,321.00	
Expenditures			
146160.689	Energy Neighbor Fund	$ 478.00	
Revenues			
143531.031	Energy Neighbor Fund	$ 478.00	
JCPC			
Expenditures			
106805 644	Strategies for Sucsess	$ 56,510.00	
106805 643	JCPC-Court Psychology	$ 2,640.00	
		$ 59,150.00	
Revenues			
103230 024	Strategies for Sucsess	$ 56,510.00	
103230 020	JCPC-Court Psychology	$ 2,640.00	
		$ 59,150.00	
Health Department			
Expenditures			
10.5200.200	Supplies	$ 2,535.00	
Revenues			
10.3260.040 (AMCO)	Animal Control Fees (Budgeting back funds collected)	$ 2,535.00	
Expenditures			
10.5900.200	Supplies	$ 6,008.50	
Revenues			
10.3560.082	Hep B Flu Shots	$ 6,008.50	

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Department and Account Number	Account Description	Increase	Decrease
Economic Development			
Expenditures			
307200 910	Special Appropriations	$ 45,114.00	
Revenues			
303422 022	Fm General Fund	$ 45,114.00	
	(Funding necessary for Incentive Grant)		
Administration			
Expenditures			
106900 901	To Economic Development	$ 45,114.00	
Revenues			
103190 050	FBA	$ 45,114.00	
	(Funding necessary for Incentive Grant)		
Scattered Site Housing			
Expenditures			
784980 960.0001	Admin	$ 40,000.00	
784980 960.0002	Site Planning	$ 3,500.00	
784980 960.0003	Clearance	$ 30,000.00	
784980 960.0005	Relocation	$326,500.00	
		$400.000.00	
Revenues			
783970 020	CDBG	$400,000.00	
	(Rollover CDBG project for 2010)		

F. BARTS Policies: Drug and Alcohol; Provision to Procurement Policy and Advisory Board By-Laws

G. To schedule a Public Hearing for February 21, 2011 at 6:30 PM regarding a request to rezone property identified as PIN # 1322-00-26-6074 from RA to Commercial.

H. To schedule a Workshop for February 21, 2011 at 5:30 PM to Review County Surplus Properties.

I. To schedule a Public Hearing for February 21, 2011 at 6:30 PM regarding BARTS Community Transportation Program Grant Application.

ITEM 2. Matters of Interest to Commissioners:

A. District Extension Director Clinton McRae introduced new Cooperative Extension Director Ryan Harrelson. Mr. Harrelson is a resident of Bladen County and has been a North Carolina Cooperative Extension agent in Bladen County for the last five years. The appointment is effective March 1, 2011.

B. Commissioner Peterson delivered the following State of the County Address:

State of the County Address
County of Bladen
February 7, 2011

Bladen County Citizens:

I am pleased to report to you on the state of Bladen County. County government plays an important role in the lives of our citizens and 2010 has been a productive year for Bladen County with the completion of important projects and initiatives.

I would like to take a moment to offer a special thanks to Commissioner Billy Ray Pait for the fine job he did chairing this Board for the past two years. In the two months that I have served as Chairman, I have developed an even greater appreciation for the responsibility associated with this position.

The Board of Commissioners, County staff and the many citizens who serve on advisory boards, and in other capacities, have worked together to achieve a number of accomplishments during the past year.

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The Bladen County Revenue Department now offers an online option for payment of property taxes. This service enhancement utilizes technology to provide much greater convenience for our citizens.

Bladen County Emergency Medical Services relocated in December to a new facility in the Elizabethtown Airport Industrial Park. This newly constructed building was funded with federal stimulus dollars and provides much needed additional space for the EMS operation. This facility is also equipped to serve as an alternate 911 Communications Center in the event that the Central Communications Center in the Courthouse would need to be temporarily relocated.

Bladen County Solid Waste continued its outstanding recycling efforts and received a first place award from the North Carolina Pesticide Board for being a leader in the recycling of pesticide containers. The award included a $2,000.00 cash prize to further enhance recycling efforts in Bladen County.

The Bladen County Water District completed a major expansion project known as Phase III-A. This approximately $4.8 million project included two new production wells, an elevated storage tank, and forty-six miles of water lines located primarily in the Council and Bladenboro communities. The Water District has also been awarded approximately $7 million from USDA Rural Development for the development of the District's upcoming expansion project, Phase III-B. This project will provide an estimated thirty-five miles of water lines on the north side of the Cape Fear River, primarily in the Ammon, Hickory Grove and Murphy town communities.
The Board of Commissioners demonstrated its continued commitment toward education this past year with a $500,000.00 increase in the Current Expense appropriation to Bladen County Schools. The Board also authorized a referendum regarding a proposed .25% Sales Tax increase which would have generated an estimated $350,000.00 per year to be dedicated for Bladen County Schools. However, this initiative was not approved by the voters in November.

The Bladen County Board of Elections and staff continued the tradition of providing a very professional elections process in 2010. Three very active elections were conducted during the year, including a Primary, Run-off, and General election. Bladen County is fortunate to have a culture of professionalism in this important County service.

The Bladen County Building Inspections staff performed inspections for 38 new houses and 151 mobile homes, in addition to commercial and other projects throughout the county. The Department collected $152,486.30 in permit fees for projects with a total construction value of $24,225,706.00. We are fortunate to have a professional staff of three inspectors, each of whom holds unlimited certification in all trades.

Bladen County Public Library experienced a significant increase in traffic during the past year. The door count at the three Library facilities increased by 12.8% and program attendance increased 23.9% over 2009. Additionally, the Library's goal for 2010 was to increase public use of computers by 5%, while the actual increase was 135%! The Library staff has also been productive in obtaining grant funding for special projects. A $5,000.00 grant was received from the North Carolina Arts Council to bring author Tananarive Due to the 2010 Beast Fest in Bladenboro. And, a $1,000.00 grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council funded a five session *Let's Talk About It* book discussion.

Bladen County and Cape Fear Valley Health System are now in the third year of the Lease Agreement of Bladen County Hospital and this continues to be a positive relationship for both organizations. Cape Fear Valley has made much needed facility improvements and technology upgrades at Bladen County Hospital. Also, a Hospitalist program has recently been implemented in an effort to provide an increased level of patient care and to enable primary care physicians to focus more on their practices. We are currently in discussion and negotiation with Cape Fear Valley Health System regarding a new agreement that will hopefully lead to a new Hospital facility in Bladen County in the not too distant future.

The Bladen County Economic Development Commission continues to work diligently with new and expanding industries. Governor Purdue was the keynote speaker at a groundbreaking ceremony held in August for DuPont Corporation's new PVF Unit. This project expansion includes twenty new jobs, an investment of approximately $60 million, and helps to increase DuPont's important presence in Bladen County.

During this past year, more than one hundred Bladen County citizens worked together on a planning process related to Golden LEAF's Community Assistance Initiative. Citizens determined priorities in areas related to Education, Job Creation and Space Utilization. These citizens are to be commended for the time and effort they put forth for the benefit of our county. Ultimately, in October, Golden LEAF allocated over $2 million for the following projects:

- Bladenboro Spec Building Upfit $239,160.00
- Cape Fear Farmers Market in Elizabethtown $400,475.00
- Economic and Workforce Development Training $215,000.00
- Equipment Leasing and Financing for Small Businesses $175,000.00
- Facility Needs for Bladenboro Historical Society, Inc. $273,700.00
- Bladen County Schools Technology Project $800,000.00

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The Board of Commissioners is committed to providing ethical leadership to our citizens. During the past year, county commissioners and employees participated in Ethics training in an effort to become more conscious of potential ethical concerns and to make wise decisions in the conduct of County business.

2010 has been a productive year - thanks to the dedication and hard work of many individuals. We are fortunate to have a great team of elected officials, staff and volunteer citizens who work so well together for the betterment of Bladen County.

In looking ahead, budget challenges are expected to be increasingly difficult this year at the federal and state levels, which can largely impact an already difficult budget situation at the County level. Difficult decisions may be required. However, we will continue to aggressively pursue economic development projects and continue to work cooperatively "**to provide customer focused County services efficiently and responsibly**."

Sincerely,
Charles Ray Peterson, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners

ITEM 3. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

- Kenneth M. Register, Jr., appeared before the Board regarding the billboard located on Highway 701 North of Elizabethtown on property owned by Buddy Strickland. Mr. Register stated that there are in excess of 30 billboards on Highway 701 North of Elizabethtown. He asked that all property owners be notified of the 2003 Zoning Ordinance, which regulates billboards.

ITEM 4. Consider Approving Requests to Fill Vacant Positions:

A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board approved to table the Requests to Fill Vacant Positions until the Board meeting on February 21, 2011.

ITEM 5. Bladen County Water District: (Randy Garner, Director)

A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board entered Session as the Water District Board of Directors.

B. Bladen County Water District Director Randy Garner and Adam Kiker of Hobbs, Upchurch & Associations appeared before the Board and requested that the Board adopt a Resolution approving Phase III-B Final Plans and Specifications. Upon a motion by Commissioner Pait, seconded by Commissioner Gillespie, the Board adopted the following Resolution Approving Phase III-B Final Plans and Specifications:

County of Bladen
Board of Commissioners

Approving Phase III-B Final Plans and Specifications

WHEREAS, the Bladen County Water District is developing Phase III-B Expansion Project;

WHEREAS, Engineers have developed Phase III-B final plans and specifications contracts 1-4.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bladen County Water District Board of Directors approves the final engineering plans and specifications contracts 1-4 as prepared by Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates.

Adopted this 18th day of January, 2011

Charles Ray Peterson, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Sam S. West, Clerk

Commissioners asked Mr. Garner about citizens concerns regarding discolored water in the Lisbon and Center Road communities. Mr. Garner and Mr. Kiker discussed efforts being made to address the issue.

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C. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tatum, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board exited session as the Bladen County Water District Board of Directors.

ITEM 6. **Advisory Board Appointments:**

A. Bladen County Airport Appeals Board – Chairman Peterson opened the floor for nominations to the Bladen County Airport Appeals Board. Commissioner Pait, seconded by Commissioner Tatum nominated Jack McDuffie for reappointment. Commissioner Priest, seconded by Commissioner Gooden nominated Steve Willis for appointment. Hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed. Steve Willis was appointed by a vote of 5 Ayes (Russell Priest, David Gooden, Mark Gillespie, James G. Smith and Charles Ray Peterson) to 4 Ayes for Jack McDuffie (Billy R. Pait, Lewis Tatum, Daniel Dowless and Delilah Blanks).

B. BRAC Regional Task Force Board: Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith seconded by Commissioner Priest, the Board voted to table the appointment until the Board of Commissioners meeting following BRAC presentation at the Municipal County Association of Bladen meeting on February 22, 2011.

C. Bladen County Library Board: Upon a motion by Commissioner Blanks, seconded by Commissioner Gillespie, the Board approved to accept the resignation of Ms. Louella Rogers Street and to appoint Keith Willis to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Street with an expiration date of December 31, 2011.

ITEM 7. **Solid Waste (General Services Manager Robert Mazur)**

General Services Manager Robert Mazur and Solid Waste Supervisor Steve Melson appeared before the Board and provided the following Plan of Action to address the concern regarding trash on Mercer Mill Road, Elizabethtown:

Update on Plan of Action & Proactive Measures

1. Bladen County Solid Waste adopted Mercer Mill Road in July 2003 thru NC's Adopt-A-Highway Campaign to take responsibility for roadside clean-up of trash/litter. Roadside clean-up has taken place from the town limits (bridge) to Highway 87. In 2008, we added Mercer Mill Road Extension to our area of responsibility. A sign is in place denoting our designation as the clean-up organization.
2. Mutual Understanding (verbal agreement) between Town of Elizabethtown Public Works and Bladen County Solid Waste that the town will pick up all trash/litter on Mercer Mill Road inside posted "town limits", which is the bridge referenced earlier, and Solid Waste will continue from the bridge to the bypass. Reaffirmed commitment on 2/3/2011 with Public Works Director Pat Devane.
3. Bladen County Solid Waste conducts a monthly trash pickup on our designated area utilizing our assigned inmates from White Lake DOC. Our observation and assessment of this area is that 90% of this trash is "thrown, not blown"! Litter consists mostly of beer bottles, beer cans, fast food bags, food wrappers, napkins and other food containers.
4. *Annual Tarp Program* – Sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Office of Beautification Programs/Keep Bladen Beautiful; to benefit truck owners. Provides 250 tarps to Bladen County Solid Waste to "give away" to truck owners in order to build awareness of the importance of tarp use to protect truck hauls and shield Bladen County roads to keep them safer and litter free for all. Tarps are given away at all convenience centers on a "first-come, first-served basis". If a truck comes in to us uncovered, staff (Lankford /County) advises them to utilize a tarp or cargo net to reduce the possibility of littering.
5. Sent letters to all commercial trash haulers that operate in Bladen, requested they make a concerted effort to ensure that all trucks, trailers and roll-offs are properly covered and that all compactor diapers are in good working order in an effort to avoid litering.
6. *Swat-A-Litterbug Program* - Administered by NCDOT Office of Beautification. Keep Bladen Beautiful is sponsoring local organization thru Bladen County Solid Waste. This program allows citizens an opportunity to be an active participant in ensuring the roadways of North Carolina are kept clean, beautiful and safe. Program allows citizens to contact DOT with vehicle tag numbers about observed litter violations and DOT will issue a letter from NCSHP informing them of the littering offense, penalties for litering and urge them to stop littering immediately!
7. Countywide Educational Campaign about litering through Keep Bladen Beautiful efforts in the schools, county community events and news media sources.

Issue of Concern: White Lake DOC no longer has roadside cleanup crews available as of January 1, 2011.

Chairman Peterson thanked Mr. Mazur and Mr. Melson and requested that they continue to be pro active and work with the city of Elizabethtown and submit an update regarding the trash concern to the Board within the next month. It was also requested that "no littering" signs be placed on Mercer Mill Road.

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ITEM 8. County Manager: (Greg Martin)

A. Mr. Martin reviewed the calendar for upcoming events.

B. The Board received a request regarding the relocation of the Salter Family monument that now sits on the lawn of the Bladen County Courthouse to the downtown sidewalk area. Upon a motion by Commissioner Dowless, seconded by Commissioner Tatum, the Board approved to table the request until a history of the monument could be provided.

C. The Board received a request from the town of Elizabethtown regarding the following Memorandum of Understanding:

Memorandum of Understanding

January 12, 2011

Whereas the Town of Elizabethtown has as part of the Downtown Revitalization Plan would like to install streetlights on the courthouse side of highway 701 and:

Whereas the Town needs to relocate the existing sidewalk (from broad street to King street) in this area, to allow the installation of underground conduit and concrete streetlight bases on it's own property to support the new lights and:

Whereas in order to facilitate this utility improvement said sidewalks will need to be partially relocated onto the property of Bladen County and:

In order to allow this mutually beneficial utility upgrade to progress, the Town of Elizabethtown and the County of Bladen do hereby agree to the following as part of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding these sidewalks dated 1-12-2011:

1. All lighting & underground conduit installed will be located on the property of the Town
2. The Town of Elizabethtown will be responsible for the maintenance & upkeep of the lights installed & will maintain them in good working order
3. The Town will be responsible for all the costs associated with the project to include installation & purchase of the lights & supporting utilities, to include the demolition & replacement of the sidewalks
4. The Town thru it's contractor Econ Construction will be responsible for any damage to County property & will make every reasonable effort to make sure none is caused. Contractor (Econ Construction) is fully insured and bonded.
5. The Town will maintain the new sidewalks as it has done in the past, though the new sidewalks may be partially on property of Bladen County.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gillespie, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board approved the request to include a Release of Liability Agreement with the Town.

D. Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board approved a request from Bladen Area Rural Transportation Service to Update the Community Transportation Service Plan, with Bladen County funding approximately ten (10%) percent of the cost.

Mr. Martin provided the following updates:

E. Medication Assistance Program is pending approval of a request to fill the Senior Center Director position.

F. Budget Committee is scheduled to meet on February 28, 2011.

G. Jail/District Attorney Committee met and will meet again in the near future.

H. Zoning Committee met on February 3, 2011 to review the Zoning Ordinance. He reported that the committee was pleased with its findings and would provide more information during the public hearing scheduled for February 21, 2011.

Commissioner Smith stated that he had received requests from two areas in the County regarding the costs and process to place a community sign in their area. Mr. Martin will contact the Department of Transportation.

Commissioner Smith stated that a community prayer service is held the first Monday of every month at 8:15 a.m., in the Commissioners meeting room of the courthouse. He requested that the service be placed on the Calendar and announced in the Department Head Meeting.

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Chairman Peterson requested that the Department of Transportation be contacted requesting a sign to be erected on Highway 87 near Ben Greene Industrial Park Drive at the entrance to the new EMS building. As a safety measure that caution motorists about the possibility of emergency vehicles entering the highway.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board entered Closed Session in accordance with N.C. G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney-Client Privilege (5) Acquisition of Real Property.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Priest, the Board exited Closed Session and re-entered Open Session.

ITEM 9. **Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:**
Mr. Herbert Johnson appeared before the Board to request a status update of the Phase III-B water project.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board re-entered Closed Session in accordance with N.C. G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney-Client Privilege (5) Acquisition of Real Property.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Pait, seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Board exited Closed Session and re-entered Open Session.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Tatum, seconded by Commissioner Dowless the Board adjourned at 9:33 pm.

Charles Ray Peterson, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:
Sara S. West, Clerk