

## **BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MEETING**

**Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**224 Seminary Street**

**Kenansville, NC 28349**

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in the Commissioners Room located at 224 Seminary Street, Kenansville, NC.

Present: Commissioners: Dexter Edwards, Wayne Branch, Elwood Garner, and Jesse Dowe, III.

Absent: Kennedy Thompson

Also Present: Mr. Davis H. Brinson, County Manager/Clerk to the Board; and Mr. Tim Wilson, County Attorney.

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Edwards.

### **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation was given by Commissioner Branch. The Board then led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

### **Approval of the Meeting Agenda**

Chairman Edwards asked if the members of the Board approved of the proposed meeting agenda and if any member or the County Manager/Clerk to the Board wished to make any changes or additions to the agenda.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Branch, carried unanimously to approve the October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting agenda.

## **REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

### **Public Comments**

No Public Comments

### **End Public Comments**

Representative Jimmy Dixon appeared before the Board to discuss the issue of districting of the County Commissioners districts as a result of the 2020 Census. Mr. Dixon reviewed various population statistics with the Board, and distributed a copy of the existing County

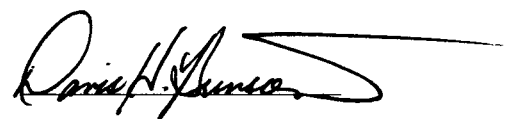
Commissioner district map to the members of the Board, the County Manager/Clerk to the Board and the County Attorney. Relative to the adjustments to the districts presented, Mr. Dixon explained that incumbents are protected in that they cannot be drawn out of the district that they currently represent. He went on to remind those in attendance that there must be five (5) districts two (2) of which must have a population that is majority minority (African American) per a federal consent agreement from 2014; districts must not deviate + or - 5% from the ideal population (total population divided by five (5) equals the ideal population of each district); and that both the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education must approve any final map. Then the federal courts must be petitioned and give approval of whatever new district map both Boards may decide to adopt. These percentages were generated by taking the most recent (2020) census figures and plugging them into the map that is currently in use. It was concluded that changes will have to be made as two districts (District I (-6.57%) and V (-5.14%)) are more than 5% below the ideal population and one district (District III (+10.15%)) is more than 5% above the ideal population. If both the Board of Education and the Board of County Commissioners decide that there will be an adjustment of the districts, Rep. Dixon advised that it will be done at no cost to the County at the General Assembly. Elected members from each Board will sit with General Assembly staff and draw up a new map that better represents the County. In the meantime, we are set at 48,715 as the Duplin County population for a minimum of three (3) years. Senate Bill 722 offers to delay the deadline in order to define our districts after both boards agree on a map to then pursue the next steps. The next step will be to file a bill, once that bill passes, the federal court has to accept. Rep. Dixon then passed out a map created by Erika Churchill, Staff Attorney at the General Assembly, that complies with the + or - 5%, to establish a point for the creation of a new district map to the members of the Board as well as to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board and the County Attorney. Representative Dixon then reviewed the Districts on the starter map and discussed the deviations by district to give the Board a better understanding of the need to authorize refinement of the starter map based on demographics. The new ideal population of each district was reported to be 9,743 which is determined by dividing the official Duplin County population according to the 2020 Census of 48,715 by the five (5) districts.

Motion was made by Commissioner Dowe, seconded by Commissioner Branch, carried unanimously to go out of open session and into closed session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Dowe, carried unanimously to go out of closed session and into open session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Dowe, carried unanimously to request to seek an appointment before the General Assembly in Raleigh, to create a new map with the Board appointed representation and guidance of Commissioner Branch and Commissioner Dowe to refine the starter map-based on Duplin County demographics, and to then have the results reviewed by the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education for a vote.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Dowe, carried unanimously to adjourn until Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. for a Board of County Commissioners meeting in the Duplin County Administrative Building located at 224 Seminary Street, Kenansville, NC.



Davis H. Brinson  
Clerk to the Board