

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
JANUARY 13, 1999**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a called session meeting on Wednesday, January 13, 1999, at 9:00 a.m. in the Emergency Operations Center Conference Room, in the basement of the Pitt County Office Building, Greenville, North Carolina with the following commissioners present:

Eugene James, Chairman
Jeffrey E. Savage, Vice Chairman
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner
Charles P. Gaskins, Commissioner
David Hammond, Commissioner
Thomas H. Johnson, Sr., Commissioner
M. Theresa Shank, Commissioner

Absent:

Mark W. Owens, Jr., Commissioner
Edith D. Warren, Commissioner

Also present were:

Thomas B. Robinson, County Manager
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney
Susan J. Banks, Clerk to the Board
Arlen Holt, PIO and Cable Coordinator
John K. Bulow, Assistant Manager
Melonie Bryan, Director of Financial Services

Call to Order and welcome by Chairman James.

Prayer by Commissioner Hammond.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

UPON MOTION by Commissioner Shank, seconded by Commissioner Hammond, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

RESIGNATION OF COMMISSIONER

UPON MOTION by Commissioner Savage, seconded by Commissioner Hammond, the Board voted unanimously to accept the resignation letter of Commissioner Edith D. Warren who will be assuming her role as a Representative in the North Carolina House of Representatives on January 27, 1999.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Now that the official results of the 1998 General Election are in, it is apparent that I have been elected to serve the citizens of Pitt county, and now three other counties, in a different way—as the

Representative for North Carolina House, District Eight. In preparing for my term as Representative, I must tender you this letter of resignation effective immediately.

As Pitt County's first female elected Commissioner, it has been a tremendous privilege and honor to serve with you and all the Commissioners in representing the citizens of Pitt County and conducting their business. We have made decisions together that will impact, in a very positive way, the future face of progress in the County. I am proud of our accomplishments and stand ready to continue to serve you and all of our citizens.

Thank you and I look forward to being involved with you in the future progress of Pitt County.

Sincerely,

Edith D. Warren

Commissioner Hammond stated that proper appreciation should be given to Edith Warren for her tenure as County Commissioner.

Chairman James reported that the Board had received a letter from the Chairman of the Democratic Party with a recommendation to appoint Mrs. Beth B. Ward as Ms. Warren's replacement on the Board for County Commissioner District C. The letter read as follows:

Dear Mr. James:

At the request of the Pitt County Board of Commissioners and pursuant to the North Carolina General Statutes, the Pitt County Democratic Party Executive Committee met on Saturday, December 12, 1998, for the purpose of selecting a recommendation to the Commission to replace Commissioner Edith Warren upon such time as she is sworn in as the representative for the eighth house district of the North Carolina General Assembly or resigns her position.

The Executive Committee convened on Saturday, at 9:30 a.m. at Three Steers Restaurant. Twenty of twenty-five organized precincts were represented. Three names were nominated to the Committee as follows: Beth Ward, Tony Moore, and Sylvester Hughey. Ms. Ward received 56% of the vote of the Executive Committee, followed by Tony Moore with 32 % and Sylvester Hughey with 12%. Beth Ward also led the voting among precincts within Commissioner District C. A copy of the minutes is enclosed.

It is my privilege to recommend to you the name of Beth Ward for Commissioner District C. Beth is a life-long resident of Pitt County and of this district. She is highly qualified to represent both the county and the district. Beth has family ties to Farmville and Bethel, and resides in the Greenville 6 area. She has served many years as a principal in Pactolus, Grimesland, and the Winterville area. She is a retired education, and currently works part-time at East Carolina University preparing future educators to teach in our schools. She and her husband are farm owners. In short, her diverse background prepares her to understand the needs of our communities in both urban and rural sectors of the county and the political and managerial issues which are a significant part of the Commission's duties. In accepting the committee's endorsement, she states a strong commitment to serve the people she will represent.

Therefore, I respectfully ask that you accept the recommendation of the Democratic Party Executive Committee and appoint Beth Ward to the unexpired term of Edith Warren to represent Commissioner District C. Please advise me when the Commission plans to act on this matter to allow me to present this recommendation as needed.

Sincerely,

Betsy H. Leech, Chair
Pitt County Democratic Party

cc: Members of the County Commission
Clerk to the Board

Chairman James noted that Ms. Leech had recently been sick and was not able to make a presentation and expressed her regrets.

UPON MOTION by Commissioner Gaskins, seconded by Commissioner Shank, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Beth B. Ward to fill the unexpired term of Edith Warren to represent County Commissioner District C on the Pitt County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Hammond commented on a time when another educator, Mr. Gaston Monk, had been the Democratic Party Executive Committee's recommendation to fill an unexpired term of a County Commissioner, but the Board did not appoint Mr. Monk. He stated that he was hopeful that there would someday be three black commissioners on the Pitt County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Bowen stated that had Commissioner Owens been present, it should be noted that this would have been an unanimously vote for Ms. Beth Ward because he had indicated so in a letter to the Chairman. Commissioner Johnson stated that all the letters should be made a part of the minutes.

The following is a copy of the letter as sent by Commissioner Owens:

Dear Mr. James:

Upon reading the morning paper, I was advised that we would have a special meeting Wednesday to accept the resignation of Edith Warren and the appointment of her replacement. I discussed the issues with you at the County office this a.m. and requested that the meeting be deferred until our next scheduled meeting on January 20th. I serve on the State Bar Counsel and have a conflict in that I will be in Raleigh serving on the Grievance Committee on Wednesday.

The County Attorney advised that I could not vote in my absence; therefore, if the meeting is not delayed, I request that you advise on my behalf that my vote would be for Ms. Beth Ward. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Mark W. Owens, Jr.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Ms. Beth B. Ward was sworn in as County Commissioner following this meeting on the same day at 1:30 p.m. by the Clerk to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC
Clerk to the Board