

Brandon Winslow
Perquimans County
July 10, 2013

On Monday, July 1st, 2013, I attended one of Perquimans County's monthly County Commissioners meeting. Nine people were seated at the front of the room facing the audience. Mrs. Cole, the chair holder, was in the middle of the line of county commissioners. We first started off by saying the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer from the vice chair holder. When the commissioners started talking at the beginning of the meeting, I didn't understand what they were talking about because I had never been to a county commissioner meeting. A woman stood behind a podium and talked about trying to get a sewage system taken away or put in on several pieces of land. I wasn't quite sure. Many things confused me, but that was a little bit about what I saw during one of the meetings.

On Wednesday, July 10th, 2013, I visited with Mr. Frank Heath, the County Manager of Perquimans County. Mr. Heath said that he has had the title County Manager for about two years. When asked what a county manager's role is, he said, "The county manager is basically the CEO of all the departments." To prepare him for his job, Mr. Heath went to East Carolina University, receiving a Masters degree in public administration. He chose East Carolina University because it was close to home, it was a good fit for him, and he liked the academic program. Mr. Heath likes to inform the commissioners about reports and information during either County Commissioners meetings, work sessions, talking to the chair members, or even through email updates. He also explained the annual budget: It begins on July 1st through June 30th. Basically, the county manager proposes how much money the county will use in that amount of time. The commissioners then propose a budget and they both compromise with a annual budget. Mr. Heath likes to work with the financing department to draft out the budget. Lastly, Mr. Heath showed me around the county office building, introducing me to the staff that worked there, telling them that I was a new employee. I smiled when he said, "They are getting younger and younger by the minute." While I was there, a court meeting was in session. It was very hectic.