

Hi, I'm Tyron N. Alford. I represent Robeson County and I serve as the secretary on youth 4-H County Council. I interviewed, as well as, toured the County Manager's Office. I interviewed Mr. Jason King, who serves as the Assistant County Manager. However, the County Manager of Robeson County is Mr. Ricky Harris. Mr. Jason King is a very busy man! He had to find time to allow me to interview him in the midst of his heavy schedule.

Mr. Jason King taught me that the job of the County Manager is to manage the budget of the county. In other words, the County Manager is the chief executive officer for the board of directors. Mr. King taught me that the County Manager can interact and report to county commissioners by public semi-monthly meetings, sub-committee meetings, telephone, e-mail, and/or in person. Mr. King told me that the annual budget process works by departments giving a projection of what they will spend next year. He also told me that the other county employees that the County Manager will work closely with when drafting a budget proposal were the department head and directors, finance committee, and the board of commissioners.

I also toured the Robeson County Manager's Office. There was a woman who showed me around, Ms. Tammy Freeman, Clerk to the Board. She introduced me to the commissioners meeting room. I learned that there are eight commissioners and a county attorney. The commissioners meet the first and third Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. The public is allowed to the meetings as well, although, they are only allowed three minutes to speak. Other departments are also allowed to carry meetings in the commissioners meeting room. The Robeson County Manager's Office makes it a duty to present or have visible the mission statement of the county in the commissioners meeting room.

Before each commissioners meeting, an agenda is always presented. There is no set time on when the meetings will end. A typical meeting ends whenever all topics have been discussed and when everyone is comfortable with the decisions that have been made. When I visited the County Manager's Office, I discovered that Robeson County has its own flag. The flag is royal blue with a picture of the Robeson County district in the middle with a golden circle around it. "Robeson County" is stated around the golden circle. Over "Robeson County" is another golden circle that has eight stars placed around it. The eight stars represent our eight districts as well as our eight commissioners. Each commissioner serves four year terms. One of the earliest commissioners was Alexander Humphrey who served 1876-1877. I also learned that Tom Taylor is the commissioner of where I live, which is Lumberton, North Carolina. I am very excited to learn more about improving my youth leadership skills. I am very interested in learning as to how the county governments work and operate. I want to learn more about the roles of county commissioners and what they may go through on an everyday basis. I know they may be constantly busy and I'm motivated to discover what keeps them going, and what duties they are demanded to fulfill.