



Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Town Council – Work Session
Thursday, October 19, 2017 – 9:00 a.m.



A regularly scheduled work session of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Meeting Room, 125 West Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

Members Present: Mayor A. B. Cooper, III; Mayor Pro Tem Danny Navey; Councilmembers: Harry Archer, Ann Batt, and John Rivers

Members Absent: Councilmember Eddie Briley

Others Present: David Walker, Town Manager; Katrina Tyer, Town Clerk; Michelle Shreve, Planner; Lee Browning, Inspector
Councilmembers Elect: Rich Johnson, Rich Porter, Austin Waters; Fred Dean, Board of Adjustment Alternate; Mike Shutak, Carteret News Times

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Councilmember Archer made a motion *to approve* the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Rivers. Vote was unanimous, 4-0. Motion carried.

Councilmember Batt made a motion *to excuse* Councilmember Briley from the meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Rivers. Vote was unanimous, 4-0. Motion carried.

Mayor Cooper welcomed Councilmembers-elect Richard Johnson, Richard Porter and Austin Waters. He introduced Dr. Tom Schultz with Duke Marine Lab and provided a few words on his background.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED DUKE UNIVERSITY AQUAFARM PROJECT

Mayor Cooper introduced Dr. Tom Schultz from Duke University Marine Lab. Mayor Cooper stated Dr. Schultz had approached him a few months ago with a proposal to build a small shellfish farm for educational purposes on their lot on the eastern end of town, near the entrance to Fort Macon.

Dr. Schultz presented the proposal to Council stating Duke University currently runs a program called Duke Campus Farm, founded in 2010. The farm is a working farm dedicated to transforming the way students grow, eat and think about food. It inspires students and visitors to experience the joys and hard work of growing their own food. They want to expand this concept to the coast with the Aquafarm project. They have been working with NOAA gathering information.

The lot they will be using (1931 East Fort Macon Road) was donated to the university in the 1990s. Until now, they did not have any ideas or plans for a use of the property. They were hoping to utilize an acre, but were only able to actually use .65 acres, which has already been marked off. The farm will not obstruct any navigable channels and is located between two existing docks. They have obtained signatures for all necessary Riparian Agreements. Currently the farm is accessible by walking through the marsh. Depending on funding, future plans are to install a parking, picnic tables, a dock long enough to access the farm, storage shed and hopefully bathroom facilities.

The plan is for students to grow clams and oysters using traditional and new aquaculture methods. Clams can be grown under the oyster bags. The equipment used will be camouflaged (black) so that it is not visible from a distance. They will use 'flip bag' technology with assistance and training from James Morris and Ken Riley of NOAA.

Dr. Schultz wants the community to drive this farm, not research, but the amount of education from this project is astonishing. The students will provide regular tours to the community. The intent is not to get into the commercial selling business, but for students to hold fundraising events putting the money back into the community for local charities.

Council and Dr. Schultz had open discussion about the project. Dr. Schultz stated they expect to conduct one or two trips a week with 5 to 6 students each. They will incorporate work volunteers in the project.

It was the consensus of Council this is a good project and wish to support it. Mayor Cooper stated the Town supports aquaculture and thinks it is a good thing, it just has to be in a good location and on a good scale to prevent inconveniencing boat traffic.

UDO DISCUSSION

This item was added to agenda in case anyone wanted to discuss a topic prior to Monday's Council meeting. Michelle is currently working on the Procedure Manuel. No comments or discussion.

FREEBOARD/FLOOD ELEVATIONS STANDARDS

Michelle explained Freeboard is a term used to describe additional height required above base flood elevation for new construction or substantially improved structures. The requirement is determined by each jurisdiction. Most of the local towns have one or two feet of freeboard, with the exception of Indian Beach and Carteret County (which have 0ft.). Atlantic Beach had a two foot freeboard until 2009, when it was removed allowing for the current zero freeboard.

All new and substantially improved construction in the Town is currently built at least to base flood elevation (BFE), which is the anticipated elevation that 1% of storms will reach. We are compliant with building codes and FEMA regulations, but we do not currently require construction to be any higher. Many property owners of new construction opt to elevate their homes higher than BFE in order to save on flood insurance premiums. We are looking to require an additional two feet to this height, in order to save homeowners money on insurance premiums, increase safety of life and property in storm events, and potentially increase our Community Rating System (CRS) points.

The CRS scores jurisdictions on how stringent they are with their floodplain requirements, education and outreach, and enforcement. Higher scores mean lower premiums. Additional points on our CRS could deliver a higher discount to all insurance policies within the Town. We are currently a Class 8, so our insurance policies for AE and VE properties are discounted 10%. Pine Knoll Shores is a Class 6, so they get twice the discount that we do.

If directed to move forward, Planning and Inspections will provide cost estimates for freeboard changes on construction projects, i.e. if you built a new house, how much more would it cost to build it with a two foot freeboard, but how much would that save you on insurance premiums?

After discussion among Council, agreeing the solution does not need to penalize homeowners, staff was directed to research alternative options, the additional cost an increase would have on homeowners and for this issue to be an item for the new Council to discuss after new year.

Another initiative that the Planning and Inspections Departments would like to pursue that could raise our CRS points is the number of elevation certificates that we require during construction. There are three times during the construction process we can require elevation certificates:

- First – Initial Elevation Certificate - required at the time of permitting. Based on the Construction Drawings
- Second – Foundation Elevation Certificate – required at establishment of foundation level. Based on Building Under Construction.
- Third – As-built Elevation Certificate – required at completion of building. Based on finished construction.

Currently we require the initial and as-built certificates. There have been instances in other coastal jurisdictions where the as-built certificate did not match the initial certificate. An example would be building the house too low and the contractor having to elevate the entire home before a Certificate of Occupancy would be issued. That could have been avoided if a foundation certificate was required, the contractor could have elevated just the foundation instead of the whole house. There is a little more variation in elevation certificate requirements throughout municipalities than the freeboard requirements. Many of the other coastal towns require all three elevation certificates.

Council supported the idea of requiring all three elevation certificates and directed staff to present this issue to the new Council in January.

RECREATIONS VEHICLES SITED IN FLOOD ZONE PROVISIONS

Recent visits and discussions with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Planner from Raleigh brought to light the Town's lack of enforcement of the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (FDPO) as far as Recreational Vehicles are concerned.

RVs within the floodplain must be moved every 180 days and be road ready, or else be permanently anchored the same way a mobile home is. RVs must be ready to move within 72 hours notice. They must have active registrations and plates and be ready to hook-up to drive away. Triple S Marina on East Fort Macon is the only area affected and inspection has determined that most of the RVs are not compliant with these requirements.

Remediation of these violations is imperative. If the noncompliant RVs are not addressed, the Town stands the chance of losing NFIP status, which would preclude all property owners from purchasing federal flood insurance.

The manager of Triple S Marina and Park was present and allowed to ask questions. She is willing to cooperate with the Town.

Council supported the endeavor and encouraged continued enforcement every six months indefinitely. Council fielded a suggestion from Councilmember-elect Rich Porter to require the same floodplain requirements to all RVs in Town. The issue can be discussed again in January.

Mayor Council Comments / Advisory to Staff

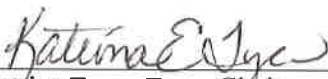
None.

There being no further action taken or business before Council the meeting stood adjourned. The time was 10:24 a.m.

These minutes were approved at the November 27, 2017 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.

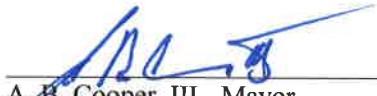
ATTEST:

(seal)


Katrina Tyer - Town Clerk



TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH


A. B. Cooper, III - Mayor