



**Atlantic Beach Town Council**  
**Special Meeting – Planning Retreat**  
Atlantic Beach DoubleTree by Hilton - Atlantic Beach, NC  
**Thursday, January 25, 2018**

A Special Meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 8:45 a.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Atlantic Beach, NC.

**Members Present:** Mayor Cooper; Mayor Pro Tem Porter; Councilmembers: Harry Archer, Rich Johnson, Danny Navey and Austin Waters

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** David Walker, Town Manager; Katrina Tyer, Town Clerk

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 8:45am.

Councilmember Archer made a motion *to approve* the agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Navey. Vote was unanimous, 5-0. Motion carried.

Mayor Cooper stated the Town Manager annual evaluation will be in the next months to allow new Council time to work with Mr. Walker.

#### **REVIEW OF CITIZENS SURVEY – COUNCIL VISION STATEMENTS**

Mayor Cooper reviewed the results of the recent citizen survey. Items related to parks and recreation/entertainment were the most noted, infrastructure was second and business development third. Other categories were Circle/boardwalk; Town appearance; enforcement of ordinances and Town services. He asked each member to discuss their vision for the Town over the next 10 years.

Mayor Pro Tem Porter stated we need to remember the plan to build the super highway from Raleigh to the coast. His five-year vision is to keep the small town beach feel without overly restricting business development. We need to add bike paths and water access overlooks with benches. Growth is coming and we need to channel it in the right directions.

Councilmember Archer feels there will be another soft development period and urges to be careful on spending large sums of money now. He feels the time is going to come when ad valorem taxes will have to be raised, especially to provide the services citizens requested in the survey. The Town should continue to adequately pay staff and provide health benefits as they are the ones that work hard. We should focus on the issues of lighting and parking along the Causeway, he referenced the NCSU plan submitted several years ago. We should concentrate on business development and recruiting good quality needed businesses; drug store, grocery store, fast food establishments, etc. He foresees hiring someone in the planning department to monitor and enforce over development.

Councilmember Navey thinks a good lesson to keep in mind is the plan for sewer years ago. Had the Town succeeded with that development and debt, the Town would probably be bankrupt now because shortly after the economy tanked. This needs to be remembered when Council considers big projects and proceed with caution; stick with quality, not quantity. He agrees, something needs to be done about the appearance of the Causeway. He would like to see outlooks added, these will add to appearance and are beneficial.

Councilmember Waters would love to be able to explain the history of the Circle development to the public. He feels new businesses will come in the next few years. He would like to see something done with the appearance of neglected residential properties.

Councilmember Johnson summarized what he feels is great and not great about Atlantic Beach. After reading the latest Land Use Plan it completely changed his plan on what the future of Atlantic Beach should be and the quality of water here, especially contamination of soundside water. The words “fecal coliform bacteria contamination” are cited ten times in the LUP. He feels the County septic rules should be looked into to ensure they are adequate for Atlantic Beach. He would like

to develop a Recreational Water Quality Committee. Mayor Cooper suggested using a grant or group to conduct research, possibly at a lower cost. He would like to promote more full-time residency and shoulder season visitors rather than the summer months and to see Atlantic Beach develop into a live music destination with blues and jazz, not just beach music.

Mayor Cooper feels the next 10 years look similar only nicer. We need to channel pressure to grow as quality, not quantity.

Break 10:02 am  
Resume 10:12 am

### **VISIONING & STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Council would like to enforce property maintenance and improve appearance around town. They would like staff to update the Property Maintenance Code and then put pressure on enforcing it.

It was the consensus to send a Request for Proposals for redevelopment of the Causeway. This should include landscaping, lighting, parking area, bridge abutment improvement and walkways.

Creation of an Appearance Committee was discussed. Mayor Cooper or a town staff member would serve as chair and work to develop a list of short and long term goals for Council to use in developing property maintenance rules.

### **FUNDING PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES**

The Town needs to actively seek grants from all areas and when hiring firms, review their success rate with obtaining grants.

Break for Lunch 11:57pm  
Resume 1:21pm

### **FIRE, POLICE & ADMIN FACILITY**

Mayor Cooper reminded that the consensus from the 2014 town facility survey was to build on the current site. He reviewed the most recent plans from BMH and input received from department heads and staff.

Mr. Walker reviewed financing options staff has been working on. Council discussed financing terms, interest rates and effect on long term projects. They discussed developing in phases and multi-fund financing. They questioned if continuing to wait, how much will be spent to keep current facilities afloat.

It was the consensus that the new facility should be cosmetically pleasing and functional. If we want businesses to clean up, they Town should also comply. It was also the consensus to obtain proposals from architects with the idea construction may be in phases.

Break 2:26pm  
Resume 2:29pm

### **TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS STRUCTURE & PROCEDURE**

Council discussed having a second public comment period at the end of the meeting to allow citizens the opportunity to comment on any business that was conducted during the meeting; perhaps instead of Mayor/Council comments.

Councilmember Archer would like to make all appoint/reappointments to boards an agenda action item rather than a consent item to ensure the citizens willing to volunteer their time are given the recognition and appreciation they deserve.

### **PARKS, RECREATION & ENTERTAINMENT**

Council discussed multiple ideas regarding parks, recreation and entertainment. It was the consensus to focus on more family events during the week, similar to the existing weekly movie nights at the Circle. At this time we will continue to handle event planning through town hall staff and use of summer interns. Council would like to promote a walking trail/bike

path. It was discussed to create a walking trail map identifying routes throughout Town providing distances; especially connecting the Town Park to the Circle, perhaps using the local Boy Scout troop to measure and map out the route to help them earn badges. Fitness stations (pull up bars, sit up bars, etc.) could also be installed along the trail. Future plans discussed were the addition of a waterslide and creating a more welcoming entrance to the Park. If we are going to look at bigger projects we need to aggressively seek funding, increase mini golf fees and apply for a PARTF grant.

Council discussed a soundside pier and kayak/paddleboard launch at the bridge abutment. It was the consensus to add signage promoting this area as a kayak and paddleboard launch, but not to include storing racks. It was the consensus to research costs for a 100 foot pier and consider this project in the next budget.

### **BOARDWALK & CIRCLE**

Construction of a new elevated boardwalk, elevated approximately 4 feet is being considered. The plan is to tie the new boardwalk in with the CAMA lot, festival area and circle point. In the festival area, we can consider building an open air amphitheater that can also serve as a picnic shade area when not in use.

Mayor Cooper will work on developing an Request for Proposals, which will include a history of the area and suggestions from the recent survey. The RFP will ask for proposals designed so the project can be built in phases.

Councilmember Archer would like to see a welcome sign installed at the west end of Town and a thank you for visiting Atlantic Beach for viewing as you leave Fort Macon State Park.

### **2020 PRIORITIES & 2018 ACTION ITEMS**

Council worked on a list of Strategic Priorities with specific projects and next steps which will be presented and discussed at the next work session.

There being no further action taken or business before Council the meeting stood adjourned. The time was 4:04 p.m.

These minutes were approved at the March 26, 2018 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.


TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH

(seal)



  
A. B. Cooper, III - Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Katrina Tyer - Town Clerk