



Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Town Council – Work Session
Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 2:00pm



A regularly scheduled work session of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Meeting Room, 125 West Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina and electronically via Zoom.

Members Present: Mayor A. B. Cooper, III; Councilmembers: Harry Archer (via Zoom), M.J. Forrest, Danny Navey and Austin Waters

Members Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Richard Johnson

Others Present: David Walker, Town Manager; Betty Odham, Planning Secretary; Morgan Gilbert, Parks and Rec Director; Sabrina Simpson, Admin Services Director; Julian Griffiee, Planner; Marc Schulze, Public Works Director; Mike Simpson, Fire Chief; Jeff Harvey, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. All members above were present in the boardroom, except Councilman Archer, who was present via Zoom.

Councilman Archer made a motion *to approve the agenda*. Seconded by Councilman Navey. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

Councilman Waters made a motion *to excuse* Mayor Pro Tem Johnson's absence from today's meeting. Seconded by Councilman Archer. Approved unanimously, 4-0.

3. Speed Limits on Fort Macon Road during winter season

Discussion was held regarding changing the seasonal speed limit on portions of West Fort Macon Road to maintain at 35 MPH year-round. Mayor Cooper outlined three options for discussion. Option 1 is maintaining the current location of Cedar Lane to the Pine Knoll Shores city limit, but make it 35 mph year-round. Option 2 is to have West Fort Macon from Ocean Ridge Dr to the Pine Knoll Shores city limits at 35 mph year-round. Option 3 is to have West Fort Macon from Mobile Dr to the Pine Knoll Shores city limits at 35 mph year-round.

Councilman Archer reminded Council that the reason these locations were previously chosen was for pedestrian crossing at those areas being heightened.

Councilman Navey asked Police Chief Harvey to validate NCDOT's opinion from a prior received email that crashes tend to increase if speed limits are falsely reduced. Chief Harvey agreed. Councilman Navey prefers the lower speed limit to protect the low speed vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.

Councilman Forrest is not opposed to lowering the speed limit, but he wonders who is driving a low speed vehicle or crossing the road in the wind and cold winter. If changing was for uniformity and continuity along the island and the community, then that is justified, but for only low speed vehicles, he doesn't feel the change is justified.

Councilman Archer feels the only people who complained about our reduced speed limit were from Pine Knoll Shores. He still sticks by the 35 mph for continuity.

Councilman Waters feels there won't be many golf carts on the road after September. He feels doing this makes it more unsafe as it increases the car to golf cart interaction with regular vehicles. He feels the amount of usage in the off-season months may be very minimal. IF the change is made for just a small handful of citizens, are we doing this for the right reasons? Do we want to make a change that will affect a lot of people every day for the benefit of just a few?

Mayor Cooper requested a public comment period on this topic for the September 28, 2020 before a decision is made that we will present to NCDOT for their approval.

4. Recap and Reports

West-end Stormwater Plans

Town Manager David Walker informed the Council that the plans and specifications are being finalized for the west end drainage project. This project will be paid for using our stormwater fees.

FEMA Reimbursement Submittal

Town Manager David Walker presented to Council the opportunity for the Town to use alternative FEMA Florence funds in lieu of the sand fence replacement. As a pilot program for Hurricane Florence, FEMA provided reimbursements (like normal) and fixed cost offers (pilot program based on the FEMA adjuster's estimates of repair). For most cases, we chose true reimbursements. However, we had one project that contained several damages grouped together by FEMA as PARKS, REC, MISC totaling a fixed cost offer of \$490,357.13. For all of these repairs, except for the sand fencing, we spent \$47,702.37 in tracked costs. Sand fencing was not done as our beach is part of the engineered beach / renourishment program and instead of sand fence, there were plantings done for stabilization.

As part of a pilot program under FEMA, the difference between our fixed cost estimate and our actual repair costs may be requested to be reallocated to other projects/equipment/vehicles that will allow the community to respond more effectively in a future event. We cannot keep the difference as a cash payout and we cannot use it for new facilities.

Our difference which we are asking to be reallocated is \$442,654.76. Departments have submitted items totaling \$442,843.02. With this reallocation of FEMA reimbursements from sand fence replacement to much needed equipment and vehicles, we will be saving taxpayers in the next few years from having to bear these costs.

Council had no comments regarding the proposed list of equipment and vehicles.

Tentative Schedule for Town Hall Construction and Staff Relocation

Town Manager presented the tentative timeline to the Council if Council votes to proceed with construction. We have also received a few loan quotes and the rates for a twenty-year loan is very competitive. We will want to ensure no penalty for an early payoff of the loan.

Council Comments

Mayor Cooper has received a request for beach strand business sales for next summer. This is something for our Council to discuss in the future and if there is interest, the ordinance can be amended as currently this type of business is prohibited.

Mayor Cooper is requesting we ask for a set of sewer fee comparison prices for bulk sewer purchase that we would resell to the Causeway sewer district if we are able to get sewer to that location.

Mayor Cooper stated that Town staff has requested Codewright to provide a proposal on what we need to do for stronger control of our zoning district that would have access to sewer if a sewer option for the Causeway comes to fruition.

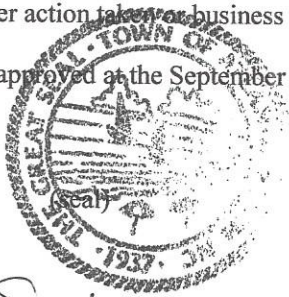
Councilman Archer asked about a contract with the developers but then his signal was lost and we lost connectivity. Mayor Cooper clarified there is no contract at this point, as we are still in the fact-finding phase.

Adjourn

There being no further action taken on business before Council the meeting stood adjourned. The time was 2:44 pm.

These minutes were approved at the September 28, 2020 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.

ATTEST:



TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH


A. B. Cooper, III - Mayor


Sabrina Simpson - Deputy Town Clerk

Minutes prepared by Betty Odham, Planning Secretary.