



MINUTES
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Town Council Meeting
Town Boardroom - 125 West Fort Macon
Road and
Electronically via Zoom
Monday, September 28, 2020



The regularly scheduled meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Monday, September 28, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. electronically via Zoom and in the Council Meeting Room, 125 West Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

Members Present: Mayor A. B. Cooper, III; Mayor Pro Tem Richard Johnson; Councilmembers: MJ Forrest, Danny Navey, Austin Waters

Members Present via Zoom: Councilmember Harry Archer

Members Absent: None

Others Present: David Walker, Town Manager; Betty Odham, Planning Secretary filling in for Town Clerk; Derek Taylor, Attorney; Jeff Harvey, Police Chief; Michelle Eitner, Planning Director; Julian Griffey, Planner; Mike Simpson, Fire Chief; Marc Schulze, Public Services Director; Leghe Gerald, Water Supervisor; Morgan Gilbert, P&R Director; Sabrina Simpson, Admin Services Director.

Others Present via Zoom:

Due to the Social Distance restrictions associated with the COVID-19 Virus, there was a limited amount of seating in the Boardroom for the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and called the roll. All Councilmembers were present, either in person or via Zoom, and able to be heard. Councilman Forrest led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDAS

Councilman Forrest made a motion *to approve* the agenda. Seconded by Councilman Archer. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, 5-0. Motion carried.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Financial Report
- b) Tax Collection Report
- c) Tax Releases Report
- d) Approval of AIA Grant Assistance Resolution 20-09-01- AB Water Asset Plan
- e) Minutes: 06/09/20 WS; 06/22/20; 06/22/20 CS, 07/27/20; 08/13/20 WS; 08/24/20; 09/08/20 WS (7/9/20 WS cancelled)

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson made a motion *to approve* the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilman Navey. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, 5-0. Motion carried.

5. CITIZEN REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Ken Hawkins, 210 Soundside Dr, Cottages at Bay Ridge

Here to speak about the service provided by GFL trash company and the amount of trash they leave behind and how rough they are with the carts. Occasionally the entire street has been missed. In summary, they are terrible. Ken noted Marc Schulze, Public Works Director and his staff are amazing.

Mayor understands his concern and he isn't the first to have it and we will make contact again with the company on their level

of service.

Gregory Bischoff, 171 Atlantic Blvd

His trash service is terrible too, but asking about timeline of repairing the boards on the boardwalk. Also noted the volleyball tournament was going very well and the kids seem to be really enjoying themselves.

Mayor Cooper said we would look at it and hopefully by this time next year we should have a new plan in place with some new ideas and possible grant opportunities.

Catherine Carter, 1001 Ocean Ridge Dr via Zoom

Some street lights at Ocean Ridge are not working.

Mayor Cooper and Marc Schulze, Public Works Director noted the issue and will submit to Duke/Progress Energy for repair.

William Cozart, 410 Ocean Ridge Dr via Zoom

Wondering if we can have patrol cars at the skatepark at night as people are using it well after closing.

Mayor Cooper said we will monitor and have access to control the lights now. We may opt to change the hours as well.

6. 2020 SUMMER PROGRAMS – RECAP

a.) Paid Parking Program and Crowd Management presented by Jeff Harvey, Chief of Police

Presentation by Chief Harvey-Parking went really well this year. Due to the pandemic, the program started a little later than in previous years. There was a Part-Time officer brought in to cover the parking program enforcement for us. By having a dedicated officer for parking, we were able to cover the area more thoroughly. Costs of the parking program include kiosks, parking stickers, supplies, replacement parts and signage. Despite the costs, we were still able to produce revenue close to \$233,176. Those funds will go towards beach nourishment and beach cleanup. Enforcement-There were a total of 1,024 citations issued. Of these, 783 were paid prior to the end of the season, 33 were resolved through the appeals process and the 208 still outstanding have been sent through collection agency to try to collect payment.

COSTS

Pavilion/Dirt Circle Parking	\$	2,500
Parking Stickers	\$	779
Replacement Parts	\$	812
Supplies	\$	562
Kiosk Maintenance Plan	\$	7,947
Parking Enforcement Phones	\$	1,287
Signs	\$	174
Kiosk Software & Fees	\$	14,475
TOTAL COSTS	\$	28,537

REVENUE

On-Street Revenue	\$	231,723
Parking Sticker Revenue	\$	12,400
Parking Citation Revenue	\$	17,689
TOTAL REVENUE	\$	261,812

Net Parking Program **\$ 233,276**

Chief Harvey touched on a few other special circumstances the Police Department had over the Summer Season such as protestors and pandemic enforcement. Overall, despite the challenges the Police Department had a productive Summer Season.

Mayor Cooper said for next season we could look at adjusting the parking rate for next season to generate more revenue for projects such as boardwalk improvements.

b.) Beach and Flag Program presented by Mike Simpson, Fire Chief

Presentation by Fire Chief, Mike Simpson-Summer brought several challenges this year beginning the season with COVID-19. Beaches were closed down in the beginning of the pandemic, therefore the lifeguard program started later than anticipated. The lifeguard pay rates did increase this year, but due to COVID-19 the hiring pool was more than substantial.

Lifeguard rescues for the Summer season: there were 58 rescues on the main beach strand, 20 ATV rover rescues, 3 near drownings-only 1 ER transport. The most important number of the Summer is there were 0 fatality drownings. There were also 62 calls for first aid and 13 lost children.

Expenses	2020	2019
Lifeguard Salaries	\$50,329.01	\$41,052.02
Advertising/ Communication	\$783.73	\$744.05
Supplies/ Uniforms/ Equipment	\$3,778.68	\$4,479.29
Misc./ Other	\$282.50	\$450.55
Junior Lifeguard Program	\$0.00	\$3,431.66
Total:	\$55,183.92	\$50,157.57

Also noted for the Summer, there was a new beach warning flag system implemented that is both ILSF/USLA compliant and is consistent with Emerald Isle, Pine Knoll Shores and Indian Beach. Warning flags were posted on the beach from Easter weekend through Labor Day. Also new for this year, signage for both the Float, Don't Fight rip current safety program as well as beach marker signs to help the public and emergency responders identify their location on the beach. Plans for 2021 include the purchase of a new jet ski, trailer and rescue board to be purchased by the Atlantic Beach King Mackerel Tournament as well as looking into potential replacement of the main lifeguard tower.

c.) Recreation Program presented by Morgan Gilbert, Director

Presentation by Morgan Gilbert-Director of Parks and Recreation started her presentation by providing total amount of revenue generated by the park this summer season. Revenue collected from t-shirts, food, and mini golf totaled \$78,523. The big event at the park for the season was drive in movies. There were a total of 6 drive in movies, with over 70+ vehicles in attendance per movie with concession sales each movie night of over \$1000. The next big event will be the Halloween Candy Cruise which will be Friday, October 30th from 6-7pm. The event will be co-sponsored by the ABPD with local businesses providing candy as an opportunity to still have a Halloween event while social distancing due to COVID.

7. PUBLIC UTILITY STATUS REPORTS

Marc Schulze, Director and Leghe Gerald, Water Supervisor, presented to the board the following status reports:

- a) Disinfection Byproducts-The results were received from Groundwater Management Associates and their recommendation is to complete a conversion from chlorine to chloramines. The recommended steps for this conversion include: seeking guidance from the proper regulatory agencies for the chloramine conversion; working with Atlantic Beach staff to determine the form of ammonia to use in the chloramination process; determining if the space in which existing disinfection facilities are located can be retrofit for chloramination; develop specific engineering plans for physical and operational changes to the disinfection system; obtain approval of the plans from the NCDEQ Public Water Supply Section; determine with Atlantic Beach if bids should be solicited for accomplishing the approved changes; construction and testing of the Chloramine disinfection system.
- b) Recreational Water Quality Testing-There were eight (8) sampling sites for water testing. There was a total of 35 samples collected over seven (7) different events this calendar year. The next steps in the process are to resume sampling in the Spring of 2021 during periods of high-water usage and heavy rain events.

8. SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION – WEST FORT MACON ROAD

Mayor Cooper provided a brief overview 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.

a.) Public Comment

Susan Hawkins, 210 Soundside Dr

She and her husband, and neighbors at Cottages of Bay Ridge, support the change in speed limits to year-round at 35mph to support street legal golf cart use. She feels the speed limit should be from the existing location at Cedar Lane to the Pine Knoll

Shores city limits. She cannot think of a single disadvantage to this request, but can think of many advantages.

Terry Dickens, 103 Bay Ridge via Zoom

Thank you for allowing citizens to have input and thank you to Councilman Navey and Councilman Waters for returning their call on this topic immediately. If the speed limit was maintained year-round, the confusion of what, when, and where the speed limit changes would go away.

b.) Council Discussion and Potential Action

Councilman Waters asked for a show of hands from the audience for support for changing to year-round 35 mph verses against. The majority of the audience members were in support.

Councilman Forrest asked Chief Harvey what he feels is the minimal acceptable speed on West Fort Macon Road. Chief Harvey feels there really isn't an absolute answer to that question. It could be 25mph or a bicycle. The low speed vehicles, by design, run 25mph. The potential of an accident is there just as with a moped. His concern is if there is an accident, they have no protection with a golf cart and there will be an accident. Councilman Forrest is concerned by the damage and capacity of injury from a collision, and how to make that safer. Are we making it safer by lowering the speed limit, or actually putting people in harm's way? He is looking for an explanation as to why this is a good idea, other than that it would be fun and handy to drive a golf cart on the highway in the off season.

Councilman Navey said he voted against the golf carts when it came up originally and feels we are opening a can of worms. He is worried about safety with having low speed vehicles on the road, but feels a lower speed in general is safer.

Councilman Waters feels it will not make that much difference to make it year-round. It seems there is support for it and it will bring consistency.

Councilman Forrest said if consistency is the reason, that is by far a stronger argument.

Mayor Cooper agreed that consistency is a bigger benefit.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson said we are a hospitality and recreation town and we will in time find a way to have more suitable conditions for walkers, bikers, low speed vehicles, mopeds, and more. He supports it and cannot find a downside of keeping year-round.

Motion by Councilman Navey *to direct* Town Manager to request NCDOT to allow maintaining the 35mph speed limit from the main intersection to Pine Knoll Shores limits year-round. seconded by Councilman Archer. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, 5-0. Motion carried.

9. LAND USE PLAN UPDATE: PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC HEARING

Michelle Eitner, Planning Director introduced Chad Meadows with Codewright and he then reviewed where we are in the process. We will have a public hearing tonight and will have another after some Division of Coastal Management comments have been adjusted in the proposed plan. Meadows reviewed the major changes with the proposed Land Use Plan over the current. He said we could hold the public hearing and adopt tonight with another public hearing later for pending changes with the Coastal Resource Commission or we can do nothing, or we can take Public Hearing comments tonight, not adopt, and act later.

The general consensus is while advertised for a public hearing tonight, we will re-advertise for a new public hearing in November or December when we are ready. Mayor Pro Tem Johnson would also like a Worksession to further review the proposed plan and he asks why it is written as a third party consultant document instead of as our recommendations, meaning change it out of the third-party voice.

10. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

None

11. MAYOR/COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor noted that there are rumors going around about development in Ocean Ridge. those are unfounded rumors.

ADJOURN

There being no further action taken or business before Council the meeting stood adjourned. The time was 7:57pm.


These minutes were approved at the October 26, 2020 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.

ATTEST:




Sabrina Simpson - Deputy Town Clerk

TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH


A. B. Cooper, III - Mayor

Minutes prepared by Betty Odham, Planning Secretary.