



## MINUTES

### Special Meeting – Planning Retreat

DoubleTree Hilton - Atlantic Beach, NC

2717 West Fort Macon Road

Friday, January 29, 2021 at 8:00am



**Members Present:** Mayor A. B. Cooper, III; Mayor Pro Tem Richard Johnson; Councilmembers: Harry Archer (via Zoom); MJ Forrest, Danny Navey, Austin Waters

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** David Walker, Town Manager; Katrina Tyer, Town Clerk; Mike Shutak, Carteret News Times

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order at 8:11 a.m. and called the roll. Everyone was present in the conference room, except Councilman Archer, who was present via Zoom.

### Review of Strategic Plan structure

Mayor Cooper started the discussion off by reviewing the refined Key Focus Areas for the Strategic Plan, which include: Great Government; Smart Growth; Environmental Stewardship; Place Making; and Recreation & Entertainment.

#### Great Government Priorities

**Review Council Survey:** The top priority for Council identified on their recent survey for Great Government was to increase citizen participation.

**Increasing Citizen Participation & Updated Council Procedure:** They want to find ways to increase citizen participation, at the meetings and in subcommittees. Mayor Pro Tem Johnson feels staff has to initiate committees, help get them going and then let the public run them and suggested the Parks & Recreation Department initiate a garden club.

Updating Council's Procedures will include eliminating motions to enter and exit public hearings. To continue requiring a second for all motions to meet the requirement in the UDO regarding major site plans. They discussed the current procedure for the Mayor to adjourn a meeting without a motion and agreed to continue this procedure with an amendment that if the Mayor adjourns a meeting, any Councilmember can make a motion to re-open the meeting. They agreed to remove the second public comment period at the end of the agenda due to the fact that it has not been utilized by the public. The comment period will remain at the beginning of the agenda. The procedures need to be updated to include the new rules for electronic meetings.

**Policy for Appointed Boards:** Council discussed procedures for recruiting members for the appointed boards through advertising and whether to amend the UDO to allow for one member of the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment to be a non-resident property owner.

**Leveraging Technology:** They discussed adding a 'See Click Fix' icon to the Town's website so the public can report issues they have or see in the Town with the click of one button.

**Thinking Regionally:** The future of Interstate 42 was discussed and the need for a focus group. Councilman Archer would like to see a professional attend a meeting and provide an update. Mayor Pro Tem Johnson would like to see the Town on board with the TDA to recruit people to this area.

**Solid Waste Container Proposal:** Discussion items were if the Town would like to pursue replacement of all of the existing garbage carts for a uniform style and color and replace all of the recycle totes with roll out carts. We need to provide public education. It was also discussed whether to implement rules for carts to be removed from the street after pickup and consider preventing street corrals.

There was discussion on the need for a building inspector or to continue contracting with the county.

**Break: 10:07 - 10:18am**

#### Smart Growth & Environmental Stewardship Priorities

**Review Council Survey:** Items included on the survey under smart growth are Causeway/COR Zone improvements; Stormwater and Recreational water quality improvements; changes to beach driving rules; increase side setbacks in cottage district; additional regulations or enforcement of littering on beach strand; and tree protection ordinance.

**Causeway and COR Zone Improvements:** The COR district includes the Causeway and a portion of Old Causeway, East and West Fort Macon Road. The Town has an Option to join an Agreement with Sugarloaf Utilities for bulk purchase of wastewater capacity. Sugarloaf would build a new plant at their expense. The lift station would be on the Causeway. The Town would install a collection system at Town's expense. When customers connect, they would pay two fees: Tap Fee paid to Town to recoup cost of the collection system and a Capacity Fee paid to Sugarloaf Utility to recoup cost of the plant upgrade. Proposes reserving 80,000 to 100,000 gallons per day capacity. Mayor Cooper presented some gpd usages estimates. It was the consensus these numbers need to be researched and firmed up.

Consideration needs to be given to revise the UDO to control what is developed on the Causeway. We are still preparing to send out a RFP for the COR Plan. Suggestions are: detailed development controls to allow the Town to negotiate elements of each project with developers; can require commercial uses on ground floor; incentivize certain uses; architectural guidelines and material standards (appearance/design committee plays a role).

### **Stormwater & Recreational Water Quality**

The recreational water testing has been put on hold due the lab not being properly staffed due to COVID. We have testing funded for the 2021 season.

Amending the speed limit on East Fort Macon Road to 35mph up until Henderson Blvd. was discussed and will be add to an agenda before next season.

### **Break 11:49am – 1:02pm**

#### **Placemaking Priorities**

**Review Council Survey:** Items in this area of the survey were, boardwalk renovation, Causeway improvements; new sidewalks and biking options; prometon of local businesses; local business alliance and new property maintenance rules.

**Boardwalk Renovation:** The goal is to make the boardwalk and Circle the heart of AB again. We will start a design competition and seek grants; make it amazing. Mayor Cooper will prepare a competition brief and submit to Council for approval. Priorities are a band shell/pavilion, additional bathroom and shaded seating.

**Causeway improvements:** Include new sidewalk and biking options.

**Ordinance Improvements regarding Town Appearance:** Review other towns property maintenance rules and update our ordinances; establish trash can rules; formalize appearance/design committee; upgrade and maintain Town lighting; make appearance a priority to staff.

**Sidewalk Projects:** Our next project on West Fort Macon should be to complete the sidewalk. Consider adding sidewalks on Old Causeway. We need to establish a priority ranking list.

### **LUNCH BREAK**

#### **Recreation & Entertainment Priorities**

**Review Council Survey:** These priorities included the boardwalk renovation, adding more events, a soundside fishing pier at the bridge abutment; summer camps, a trail and dog park behind public works, water slide at the park, Pelican Street dock, and new playground equipment.

Councilman Archer disconnected at 2:25pm.

**Event Brainstorming:** Council would like to see more athletic, music, art, and food events; especially during the shoulder season. Additional beach volleyball tournaments can be held. Council was tasked with submitting event ideas they would like to see scheduled.

It was discussed to research funding and grants to pursue the pier fishing area at the bridge abutment.

**Town Park:** It was the consistency of Council there needs to be additional shade areas at the park. It was suggested to set up a tent up as a test run.

**Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to review Employee Performance**

A motion *to enter* Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to review employee performance was made and seconded. Vote was unanimous, 4-0. Motion carried. The time was 3:08pm.

The Council and the Town Manager discussed multiple personnel issues. No action was taken.

A motion *to exit* closed session and adjourn was made and seconded. Vote was unanimous, 4-0. The time was 4:10pm.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further action taken or business before Council the meeting stood adjourned. The time was 4:10pm.

These minutes were approved at the March 22, 2021 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.

TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH

ATTEST:

(seal)

  
A. B. Cooper, III - Mayor

  
Katrina Tyer - Town Clerk

