

TOWN OF CAPE CARTERET
WORK SESSION & SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

7:00 PM October 14, 2013

Call to Order

The Cape Carteret Board of Commissioners meeting came to order at 7:00 pm in the Debbie E. Stanley Board of Commissioners Room.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Boy Scout Kenneth Blaze

Jessica Holt is a Merit Badge Counselor with Boy Scout Troop 446. The young men are taking Citizenship in the Community.

Moment of Silence: on this Columbus Day to honor our Country

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Fowler

Commissioners King, Saunders, Seegers, Patterson and Hunt

Attorney Curtis, Carteret News Times, 6 citizens and 8 Boy Scouts

Any changes to the agenda? Yes, add under New Business, Repair of Irrigation in front of Lowes Home Improvement. Commissioner Hunt moved to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Commissioner Saunders. **Vote approved 5-0**

Planning Board Report & Building Inspector's Report: Brandon Hawks

- Fee Collections for the month of September were \$5869
- Multi-Use Path update: The driveway have been replaced. A few of the punch list items have not been completed. The final walk through will be completed this week. DOT has issued a supplemental agreement to extend the time of the funds available to complete the project.
- Brandon was invited to the Izaak Walton League and spoke to them about his office and how our permit process works to protect the environment.
- Brandon will be attending classes for his Fire Level 3.

Board of Adjustment: Secretary Karen Zornes

The board heard an appeal from a determination made by the building inspector. The case had to do with an ice house that would have been placed on the property of Ribeyes Restaurant. The appeal was denied.

Police Chief's Report: Donald Miller

- Officers will be attending the range, this week, for training.
- The Chief is waiting for the Governor's Highway Patrol Safety Program's window to open, so he can purchase two radar units for the vehicles. We have four more years to replace the ones we have. We own the radar equipment, but both types of radar units are being phased out. We can always put the older radar units in the reserve cars.

Committee Reports

Fire Dept. /Commissioner Seegers: The ILA meeting was held on October 9, 2013.

For the three months of July, August and September there were 160 calls. Of these calls 45 were fire, 103 were EMS, and 12 were Fire/EMS calls. Cape Carteret had 41 calls (14 fire, 22 EMS & 5 Fire/EMS). The new fire truck should be available by May 2014. The cost of the fire truck is \$404,501. The ILA is financing \$199,528 through BB&T at an interest rate of 2.21%.

The ILA meetings will be changed to a new location on January 8th. Mayor Fowler will determine the new venue.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Hunt: He had a question about the clerk's position. He did not see the ad we posted but looked at the old ad from 2011. What is the rationale for the assistant clerk's pay? In July 2011 the salary range was \$21,000 to \$24,000. We hired the assistant clerk at \$23,500. In the past two years the assistant clerk has received three raises, totaling over \$4,000. Currently, we are budgeted at \$27,578. The new hire will receive \$4,000 over what the current clerk is earning as an experienced clerk with two years of service. If you look at this, it is an \$8,000 increase in salary. That is a 34% increase.

The **mayor** said the volume of business has increased in the clerk's office. We have had a very busy two years. Our current assistant clerk is probably underpaid. The proposed candidate has better credentials to do this job. If you crunch the numbers we may be paying her more in salary but the proposed candidate is not accepting medical insurance, which saves us about \$9,000.

Mr. Hunt: Because we are saving money on the insurance we can afford to give her more salary?

Commissioner Saunders said she had the clerk pull the salary range for assistant clerks and that is the range from the Leagues study.

Mayor: When we decide to talk about this, it will be in open session and we will have time to debate what the salary will be. You will not only have a say in it, but also a vote.

Mr. Hunt: If I understand this, it is not about the candidate, but the position. We are hiring a candidate for the police chief, and he is not accepting medical insurance, but we are offering him the same salary as the current chief was paid four years ago. There seems to be a contradiction here when you consider the two positions and applicants. One has five years' experience and her range has increased \$8,000, but we have a chief candidate with 20 years' experience and his range has not gone up.

Mrs. Saunders: I think you are assuming that we are hiring someone and that has not been decided. The committee that was chosen should be trusted to do the job; otherwise you should not have chosen that committee.

Mr. Hunt: I am just questioning why the job salary has gone up so quickly.

Mayor: You asked me some days ago if this was a 40 hour a week job. Quite frankly, I think it is an 80 hour a week job. I watch it more closely than anyone in this building, other than Karen does. There are four jobs in the outer office. There is tax collector, clerk to the board, assistant clerk to the board, bookkeeper and receptionist. We have two people doing four/five jobs. Karen sits here at 7:30 in the evening. She will do 40+ hours this week. I asked for a receptionist that would shield Karen and the assistant clerk who handles the money. I can't imagine balancing the books for the town while every thirty seconds answering the phone or the front window. Come and watch what is going on. Anyone who does will attest that these two ladies are certainly doing the job adequately, and for the appropriate amount of money. The current candidate's credentials are quite different than the current assistant clerk, relating to governmental experience. If hired, she will need a lot less training.

Mr. Hunt: I do not want to belabor the subject, but normally when you hire someone that you will be training the person is paid at a lower rate than the experienced person that is leaving. Yet, we may be paying that person \$4,000 more and she still needs to go through a probationary training period. It seems unusual.

Commissioner Patterson: I think we are getting ahead of ourselves talking about salaries when we haven't decided to hire anyone. It sounds like you are not arguing about the money we are paying the new clerk as much as you are arguing the point that we need to pay the new chief more. When we get to that portion of the meeting we can discuss the salaries.

Mayor's Report

- Student of the Month: All the photos of the children honored as *Student of the Month* are up

on the wall, thanks to our photographer, Karen Zornes. Our attorney started this program and provides a gift certificate to each child.

- Board Photo: We have a new Board photo and it is up on the wall. The mayor thanked the clerk for taking the photo. He would like a photo of each board, every year.
- Letter thanking Officers: The mayor read a letter from a resident about a job well done by Officer's Buddy Mitchell and Jimmy Johnson. (Applause)
- Municipal Initiative: In a few days we are going to mail 1621 town criers for the first time in the history of the town. In the town crier there will be a survey. The number includes all property owners, renters and business owners. He is hoping that people will respond, so we will know what our citizens want. The mayor thanked Commissioner Saunders for her help on this project.
- Red Folder: We are going to tie up the loose ends of the projects that we have been working on. He would like the projects completed if possible before the new board takes over in December.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (Agenda items)

Minutes and Records Retention Amendment

OLD/PENDING ITEMS

Star Hill & Park Ct Project: Commissioner King briefed the board. The engineers are finishing up the surveying from Park Court up to the spillway and the engineering drawings for the two property owners (Mr. McLaughlin and Griffin). Mrs. Shackelford will have her attorney draw up the easement and she will return the \$2300. When that has been completed, we will issue a brief memorandum and finish the job.

Yaupon Pipe/Bulkhead: Commissioner King briefed the board. The contract is from Billy Norris who is ready to start before the end of the week. The two property owners are going to pay to the center of the pipe. We will be responsible for the penetration of the pipe. The engineer has completed the design. The pipe is \$4000 and the reinforcement maybe an additional \$500. We will dam the water on the drop inlet across the street, pump the water over to the canal during the construction period. We will use an electric pump, and sod around the inlet instead of concrete. The street will be closed in that area. We will put a detour signs. It won't be more than a day or two.

Boat ramp stickers: Commissioner Patterson said that last month we decided to look into stickers that would go on the trailer. The cost is \$283 for 500 stickers. She would like the board to consider allowing two stickers per application and charge \$5 per additional sticker. The clerk said we will place the pass number and the trailer number on the sticker in permanent marker. A suggestion was made to offer a multi-year pass of 3 to 5 years. **(Agenda item)**

NEW ITEMS

Resource Officer Grant: Mayor Fowler said the superintendent of schools contacted the chief about possibly getting a \$42,000 grant to fund a school resource officer. It is a two year grant and is a 2-1 matching grant. The mayor polled the commissioners and they all agreed to the suggestion. The town's portion would be \$14,000. The mayor has composed, but not mailed, a letter to the other four mayors of the neighboring towns that feed White Oak Elementary School. Bubba McLean gave the Mayor a list of all the number of students out of each town and a percentage that each town represents. The letter will ask each town to fund equal to, if not greater than, the percentage of students that they send to White Oak. The highest percentage of the all the children coming from any one location is the County. Thirty-three percent of kids do not live in any city limits. A letter will also be sent to the county asking for funding. If everyone did their percentage there would be no heartburn for any one town. It is a very small amount of money when you consider it is going for the protection of citizens that are most vulnerable in the town. We have been successful having an SRO in our town before. Officer Schelinder

is excited about being the SRO again. The mayor is not sure of when the grant will be available. If no one else were to help, we would not have to pay more than \$14,000.

Commissioner King said his vote is contingent on what the other towns decided to do.

Commissioner Seegers said if you use the percentages the county's portion would be \$4700 and our part would be \$3259.

Mayor: It was offered to the county first, but they declined it. If they do not want to put SRO's in 13 schools, in the county, at least consider one school that has had a successful SRO program.

Allies for Cherry Point's Tomorrow (ACT) funding request: Mayor Fowler said the county has asked him to bring this to the board's attention. They are asking for funding of \$800. **(Agenda item)**

Christmas Lights: Mayor Fowler has had numerous residents ask him to put up more Christmas lights. The Green Ribbon Committee had a strong voice about this. Terry Ashby was asked to speak. She said when you drive through Cedar Point there streets are lite up. It is beautiful. She went to the town board of Cedar Point and asked about starting a *Festival of Lights*. She would like Cape Carteret to get involved. December 7 and 14th is the scheduled date. Emmanuel Baptist Church has a Town of Bethlehem. Some of the actors used to play in Worthy is the Lamb, which brought thousands to our area. You walk through the town and you will see the people of the time and the nativity scene. A lot of people attend this. If you have lights along the streets, the businesses stay open longer, and you have something for the kids to do, then you can pull from Beaufort, Morehead City, Craven County, and Onslow County. She is forming a committee. As a citizen of Cape Carteret she said our lights were embarrassing. Half our lights were out, and some were not put up. When you drive through Swansboro and Cedar Point and see their lights, ours is sad. Cape Carteret is better than that and we can do better than that. This is one little thing we can do to bring business in to Cape Carteret. We have Mac Daddy's the biggest bowling alley on the eastern coast of North Carolina. There are things we can do to pull people in to our area.

Commissioner Patterson said she could not agree more. We talked about this last year. We talked about purchasing new ones this year and then a couple each year after. It is a great idea. I think it would be sad to be amongst all this beauty around us, and then be the stick in the mud. I am in favor.

Commissioner Seegers said there is \$1500 in the budget. He asked how much the lights cost and the clerk said around \$400 a piece. The board said they would find out more information on how many we need and the cost.

Commissioner King said we should add to what we already have rather than replace the ones we have. The **Mayor** appointed a committee of three (Mr. Seegers, Mrs. Saunders and Terry Ashby). **(Agenda item)**

Tree City USA: Mayor Fowler directed the item to Attorney Curtis. He has suggested that we be designated as a Tree City USA. There are three requirements: budgeted tree maintenance, an ordinance related to tree maintenance and pruning, and requires an Arbor Day celebration. Attorney Curtis said there are 79 communities in NC that are designated. Originally, he thought of having Al Fox start the committee to get this going. Our town is filled with beautiful trees. We have the trees along Hwy 24 that honor our citizens. A tree board would need to be appointed. Commissioner Seegers said he would need a little more research. **(Tabled for more research)**

"Up West" : Mayor Fowler said a suggestion was made to refer to this region as "Up West" instead of "Down East". The board chose to drop this subject.

ADDED: Repair of the Irrigation in front of Lowes Home Improvement:

Our contractor damaged and area on Lowes property. Commissioner Hunt said the three bids were all

over the place. Brandon said he met all the bidders on site and explained what needed to be done and this is what he got. It has to be repaired, so the board added it to the agenda. (**Agenda item**)

CITIZENS TO SPEAK

Mr. Steve Bilvin: Why would the town be responsible for a contractor's mistake? The attorney said we are responsible for the areas outside of the disturbed area. This does not mean we won't go after them, but for now we have to repair the area.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Halloween will be on Thursday, October 31, 2013 from 6-8:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm on a motion by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Patterson. **Vote approved 5-0**

These are the minutes of October 14, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. Zornes, NCCMC
Town Clerk