

TOWN OF CAPE CARTERET

WORK SESSION MINUTES

7:00 PM April 8, 2013

Call to Order

The Town of Cape Carteret Board of Commissioners work session came to order at 7 PM in the Debbie E. Stanley Board of Commissioners Room. This is a cell-free meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Commissioner Seegers

Moment of Silence

Paul Myers of Old Cape Carteret

Roll Call

Present: Mayor David Fowler

Commissioners King, Seegers, Hunt, Patterson and Saunders

Attorney Curtis, Carteret News Times and 5 citizens

Any changes to the agenda? Yes, add closed sessions for personnel and litigation.

Commissioner Seegers motioned to approve the agenda changes, seconded by Commissioner King. *Vote approved 5-0*

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

- **Fee Collection Report for March:** \$973.60
- **Multi-Use Path update:** A notice to proceed was issued and construction is underway. We are allowed 90 days to complete the project, but the contractor has submitted a 45-day completion schedule.
- **Panhandling Ord:** The planning board recommended holding a public hearing for the approval of an ordinance regulating panhandling. A special meeting, on April 29th, to hold the public hearing was set.
- **Preliminary Sub-division Plat:** Last month, the planning board suggested holding a public hearing for a preliminary sub-division. It was not scheduled and needs to be heard before May 4th. The board agreed to hold a Special Meeting on April 29th. The board agreed to begin at 5 PM.

Board of Adjustment: None

Police Chief's Report: Donald Miller

- The Chief described an accident that happened last Wednesday. A woman rolled her car. The passengers, four children and her boyfriend were taken to the hospital. One child was ejected from the vehicle and was positioned under the vehicle still in his car-seat. She was driving under the influence. She has been charged with several violations.
- The department is preparing for the summer months. He has hired two part-timers and they are on duty.
- The State mandated "In Service" training will begin this month.
- Weapon training will begin next month.

Clerk's Report: Karen Zornes- none

Committee Reports

Fire Dept. & Interlocal Agency: The report will be given next week.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Saunders: We do not have the software database program Access, which will hold the addresses and phone numbers of our residents. This will help with the organization of the Town Crier, boat pass holders and park pass holders. The cost is \$399. We have an option of adding the 2007 version at a cost of \$80. She does not want to combine different operating systems. The board agreed.

Commissioner Seegers: The leaf and limb pickup will begin Tuesday morning April 9th at 7 AM. We have outsourced the pickup this time. It will be a large pick-up, perhaps 50 loads. It should be collected within 1 or 1 ½ days.

Commissioner Hunt: 1. We have had two serious accidents in the last week and our police officers responded to those accidents by providing aid and helping the victims in a very commendable manner.
2. We have a community watch meeting this Friday. The public is invited, 6 PM at the Western Carteret Community Center.

Mayor's Report

- We received a thank you letter for the donation made to the Izaak Walton League in memory of Al Fox.
- The large scale appliance/furniture pickup was a success. In the past we have allowed people to place the items on the rights-of-way, but then the town looks horrible. We decided to advertise that we would pick up, per request. It was well organized and it was completed in two days. The Mayor commended the staff for a job well done.
- The Mayor attended "Town Hall" day last week in Raleigh. The new, young general assembly is trying to revamp the Sales Tax system. Their goal is to do away with corporate and personal income tax. One of the components of this change is how the towns will pay for services we provide. The idea is for towns to operate entirely on ad valorem tax and sales tax. Senate Bill 363 and 394 both have language in it that will try and do away with business privilege license, our franchise taxes, and the ABC redistribution tax. The impact on our town would be a minimum of \$121,000 up to \$150,000, which equates to 3 – 4 cent increase in ad valorem taxes. Hopefully, they will rethink these bills. One of the things the Mayor wants to do to reduce the burden on our residents is to bring in businesses that pay into the system to relieve the taxation rate on the citizens. The Mayor hopes to bring his economic plan to light before the end of the year.
- The Mayor would like to add to the consent agenda a Resolution to participate in the Municipal Initiative. It is a partnership between Carteret County, the Dept. of Commerce and East Carolina University. They want to help the towns and county develop a 50-year economic plan that retro-fits the needs of each town to our own needs. The cost is about \$1,070 in our budget. All agreed.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

March 11 & 18 & 23, 2013 Minutes (**AGENDA ITEMS**)

Resolution Requesting Services of the NC division of Community Assistance (Municipal Initiative)

Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation 2013

OLD/PENDING ITEMS: NONE

NEW ITEMS

Rental ad for Sound Bank Building: The Mayor stated that he has not received a commitment from a company from Morehead City to rent the Sound Bank building, and he would like a consensus to advertise immediately. Comments from the discussion:

The rent should be negotiable. If reasonable rent is a \$1,000 and you are offered \$900 that should be considered.

- The building is not a perfect building, due to parking for certain types of businesses
- We have a triple net lease. The renter pays the utilities.
- Have we confirmed with Sound Bank that they will be out by June 30th? The Mayor stated that he

made it clear that their last day is June 30th and we do not want to deal with day-to-day rental.

- If we do not have a tenant and Sound Bank needs more time, we should rent it to them.
- Unless there is a lot of bad weather, their building should be ready.

The board agreed to draw up a rental advertisement for the rental of the Sound Bank building. (**AGENDA ITEM**)

Fiscal Year 2013/14 Budget: The **Mayor** would like to begin the budget process soon. Commissioner Saunders has been having one-on-one meetings with the board. The mayor went over all the events of the current budget when the board was seated. Commissioner Hunt did an excellent job vetting he budget, looking for waste. We froze the budget and only spent what we had to. We did not use our capital reserves to balance the budget, as we have in the past. We have a bathroom project started, we gave a tax cut to our citizens, and we gave all our employees a raise of three percent. Two police officers received a six percent raise. Of all the boards that he has sat on, he has never seen the scrutiny of the budget completed in that manner.

Last year's budget has set the stage for this year's budget. This year's budget should be very easy, yet we have certain challenges we have to meet.

The 2013-14 budget needs to insure and to improve on our quality services. Our reserves should be focused on short-term and long-term projects to that end, whether they are for police cars or waste-water studies. Raises for our employees and tax cuts to our citizens, while desirable, must be determined based on a realistic assessment of our current financial health.

Commissioner King: Other than the storm-water study he does not have any other projects on the table. He would like to see the storm-water project to continue and for funds to be set aside this coming fiscal year. Town buildings are a repair as it happens, so some money has to be set aside for building repairs.

Commissioner Saunders: On her mind is technology and bringing the town into the current century. There is a lot of room for growth and the way we handle the distribution of the Town Crier, and the way we collect taxes. It seems like we are living in the past and we need to go forth. We need to look at funding some areas to benefit the town and the citizens of the town to make sure they are getting better use of the dollars they are paying.

Commissioner Seegers: We have major issues with our streets. We need to see if this is something we need to outsource. We will need to increase the cost for the leaf pickup. Our drainage and ditching is a problem. We do not need a new vehicle, but we may need some minor equipment.

Commissioner Hunt: The only thing we will need is the replacement of a new car. We will need \$1200 for a new transmission. The money that we budgeted for the leaf and limb was for the dump fees. The cost of the pickup was funded under the general budget of the public works. Capital improvements are not the operating budget. Whatever capital purchases we make come from capital reserves. We should use the Powell bill funds for the storm-water engineering before we use our capital reserves.

Commissioner Patterson: agrees with the suggestion to modernize the town, especially when it comes to distribution of the Town Crier, even if it means more postage, contracting the pickups and purchasing stickers for the boat ramp passes, instead of the hangers. The website is better than last year, and we will continue to improve it.

The board agreed to discuss the public works department first, at our special meeting on April 29th. The board agreed to begin at 5 PM. If we have time, everyone should be prepared to go over other departments. The board wants to get the top two budgets done first (Public Works & Police)

Citizens to Speak:

Mr. McLawhorn on Star Hill would like to put a pipe in the swell and cover it up, because the swell keeps washing away. The Mayor said the problem is that we are at sea level and we are subject to storms. The Mayor looked at his property, and Mr. Griffin's. We are working on getting a third party (Engineering Company) to determine where the water is coming from. The town seems to fix small problems that end up causing larger water problems. This is a complex issue and we are trying to resolve it.

Announcements: NONE

Closed Session: 7:55 PM

Commissioner King motioned to enter into closed session per GS 143-318.11 (a)(6) to consider the fitness of an employee and per GS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with our attorney in order to give direction on possible litigation, seconded by Commissioner Hunt. ***Vote approved 5-0***

Open Session: 8:20 PM

The board returned to open session on a motion by Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Patterson. ***Vote approved 5-0***

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

Salaries/Bonuses: The board decided to have a discussion on giving raises or bonuses. Last year the board discussed not giving raises this coming year. Three department heads asked about giving bonuses to three people. The Mayor said Mary Linda should be given a salary adjustment. Commissioner King wanted to give Brandon a bonus because of all the work he did on the sidewalks. Commissioner Seegers wanted to give Alex a bonus for taking over as the streets supervisor while Buddy was out sick. After a long discussion about the fairness of bonuses and, after the attorney stated that the board should have everything in writing, the Board decided to table the subject.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9 PM on a motion by Commissioner Seegers, seconded by Commissioner Saunders. ***Vote approved 5-0***

These are the minutes of April 8, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. Zornes, NCCMC
Town Clerk