

TOWN OF CAPE CARTERET
WORK SESSION MINUTES
7:00 PM January 14, 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.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Seegers

Roll Call

Present: Mayor David Fowler

Commissioners King, Seegers, Hunt, Patterson and Saunders

Attorney Curtis, Carteret News Times and 21 citizens

Moment of Silence

Senator Jean Preston

Paul Smith of Deer Creek

Any changes to the agenda? Yes, to remove the Closed Session from the agenda and place under Old Business, discussion of the ponds in front of the Cape Carteret Baptist Church. Commissioner Hunt motioned to approve the agenda changes, seconded by Commissioner Saunders. ***Vote approved 5-0***

Speaker: Keith McGowen of Piedmont Natural Gas

The topic for tonight is about Piedmont Natural Gas making an investment from the town of Morehead City to Cedar Point. This should help the citizens save money on their utility costs. Service depends on demand. A survey was sent out to Old Cape Carteret residents, but it was sent out during the election and probably got thrown away with all the campaign material. Piedmont Gas only received 14 surveys. Because of the small number received, service will not become a reality. The company has talked about re-sending out the survey.

Commissioner Seegers is a big fan of natural gas and would like to see the survey repeated.

The Mayor added we could put the survey on the website.

Commissioner Hunt wanted to know the percentage of service requests it would take for them to lay the lines. He used Anita Forte, with approximately 60 homes, as an example.

Approximately 30% would have to request service.

Commissioner Seegers asked how much it would cost to tap onto the lines. Mr. McGowen said it would depend on the services requested.

Bubba McLean wanted to know an average cost? Again, it all depends on what you want to heat. At the high end, it would be \$300 per appliance. Mr. McGowen gave the board an example of the cost change. He left information for residents that may be interested.

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

- Fees Collected for December \$3152.
- Multi-use update: It has taken four years but the bidding process has begun, and the bids are due back on February 8, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. The town is required to hire a Construction Engineering Inspections firm to oversee the construction administration and project testing and inspections. We should be approving that firm at the February meeting. The estimated start date will be March 4th with a completion date of June 28, 2013. The cost of the engineering firm is covered by the grant.

Board of Adjustment: no report

Police Chief's Report: Donald Miller

- One officer is down and will be out for at least 4-5 weeks.
- The chief is in the process of hiring a part-time officer.
- The chief is still waiting for the department's new trailer. It should be here in 3-4 weeks.

Clerk's Report: Karen Zornes

The 2012 taxes became delinquent on January 8, 2013. The outstanding amount is \$26,424. The clerk will be attending the IIMC conference this week from Wednesday to Saturday.

Committee Reports

Fire Dept. & Interlocal Agency: Commissioner Seegers:

- The generator is in.
- The department is waiting for their ISO rating.
- The attorney is reviewing the personnel policy. The administrator's position has been deleted until there is a need for one. Until then the position will be divided among the Fire Chief, the ILA board, the department head and the budget officer.
 - In the month of December there were 92 fire calls, of which 78 were EMS, 10 fire and 4 fire/EMS. Of these calls, Cape Carteret had 21 EMS calls. For the year of 2012 there were 1190 calls. Of the annual calls, Cape Carteret had 145 calls.

ILA Budget: The capital improvement budget, \$1,906,012, has been presented. The increase is for a new fire-truck in the amount of \$400,000.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner King: Commissioner Patterson and I attended the mediation process for commercial and recreational fishing. The meeting was 4 ½ hours and we came up with nothing. We could not seem to negotiate anything. Lewis Daniel will take it to his board for any action. Commissioner Patterson said if you feel strongly about this issue the residents need to email Mr. Daniel. We will put it on the website and Facebook.

Sidewalks: The process in working with the DOT is very involved. There is possible development down by the triangle. If that takes place, we would have a lot of the sidewalk in place that connects the community to the Library.

Commissioner Patterson: A reminder that it is the week of the leaf and limb pick-up. The clerk reminded everyone of the rules:

1. Do not put the leaves in bags
2. Separate the leaves and the limbs
3. Once the debris has been picked up, do not place more piles out.

Mayor's Report

NCLM: The Board was invited to attend the NCLM Advocacy Goals Conference on January 24th. No one was able to attend, so the board will send the clerk.

Sound Bank is leaving Cape Carteret. We have a rental agreement until June 30, 2013. We are not interested in a month to month lease. The Mayor has two potential clients and would like a consensus from the board to negotiate the rental fee with future clients. The board agreed. The rent should be the same amount, if not higher. The final decision would be voted on by the board.

Retreat: The Mayor would like to hold a retreat meeting either Saturday, March 23rd or 30th. The commissioners will let him know by email.

Budget process: The Mayor would like the board to start the budget process on April 8, 2013.

Governor McCrory: The Mayor had the honor of meeting with the Governor, twice last week. He is aware of Cape Carteret and he has a great vision for the State. His main concern is that the State does not have a “cloud”. There are no backup systems. So, the discussion we had about backing up our computer system is a concern throughout the state.

Buddy Dew: The Mayor updated the residents on Buddy’s condition. He is in good spirits. He looks good. He has lost 50 pounds. Community Watch donated a \$100 check. Harvey and Mel Brooks matched the donation. Private Citizens are donating money. Tara is collecting money from the board. It is so nice to see the community come together for one of our own. Buddy truly appreciates all the help and asked me to say thank you.

Senator Jean Preston: Her Memorial Service will be on Saturday, January 19th at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers the town will donate to the Jean R. Preston Young Women’s Scholarship Fund.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

December 17, 2012 Minutes (Agenda item)

OLD/PENDING ITEMS

Ponds in front of the churches: The Mayor said the town was concerned about possible litigation. After he spoke with council, it was deferred. The Board’s concern is if they have any kind of responsibility or liability. The town does not own any part of the property. The town has agreed to act as a facilitator in an effort to determine which groups are responsible. (DOT, Swain and Associates, Lowes Foods, Lowes Home Improvement, Churches) Town staff said records do not specify who is responsible for the maintenance and no one is entirely clear who all contributes to the water flow. It appears that the pond catches storm water runoff from NC 24, nearby parking lots and possibly Anita Forte Drive. The town will meet with the Corp of Engineers to determine if the pond is considered wetlands. There is another concern that involves the nutrias that have been spotted in the ponds. How are they affecting the pond problem? Mr. Tursi from the Coastal Federation is willing to help and share his expertise. The board will keep the public updated.

NEW ITEMS

Specialty Market Vendor Public Hearing (add a new chapter to the ordinance) (Agenda item)

Appointment of Commissioners (Departments): The board agreed to go over the department titles. Some commissioners expressed that they would like to hold other titles. Commissioner Hunt does not mind handing over the finance department but would like to wait until the new fiscal year.

After a short discussion the board agreed by consensus to the following titles:

- Commissioner King: Building Inspector/ Buildings
- Commissioner Saunders: Finance/Budget
- Commissioner Seegers: Public Works/Streets
- Commissioner Hunt: Police/Public Safety
- Commissioner Patterson: Parks and Recreation

The Mayor will remain in charge of Administration. He asked that each commissioner work with each other, and to pass on information as needed.

New Town Welcome Sign: Commissioner King has been working on a “Welcome to Cape Carteret” Sign. The location of the sign would be on the property of Culligan Water. He would also like to put a second sign at Taylor Notion and Highway 58. This was an agreement with Yardworks Landscaping in connection with the sidewalks. Yardworks agreed to relocate the crepe myrtles for our sidewalk project pro bono if they could have a small sign under the welcome sign. Mr. King has an estimate of \$600-800 for the sign but believes it may be higher. He will have a truer cost next week.

Commissioner Hunt is confused. He said we have not discussed this issue as a board. You have gone out and done all this leg work and in one week you want an approval to go forward. We prepare a budget each year. After the budget is put in place if we have an emergency, then we should amend it. But this is not an emergency and should be put into next year’s budget. Commissioner King: We did discuss this under the relocation of the crepe myrtles. I have had a sign design since late last year. We only got the agreement two weeks ago. (After the two men discussed if the item should be in this or next year’s budget, the Mayor asked the board to decide if it would be an agenda item.) All agreed. **(Agenda item)**

Citizens to Speak:

SRO: An SRO letter, from Principal Everett of White Oak Elementary, was presented by Cindy Whitmoyer.

Cindy Whitmoyer 121 Sutton Drive: She moved here because White Oak School was known for its safety. She is concerned that the SRO is not present.

Melissa Chatman: Silver Creek resident- Our campus has four buildings, and a multitude of entry points. There are many steps one can take but the most visible one is the presence of a uniformed officer. Another way is an electronic entrance. In comparing the two, the physical presence of a first responder wins. She knows this will all come down to money, but how much are our children’s lives worth?

Jill Hooley: 104 St Augustine Drive: Ms. Hooley is a 5th grade teacher at the school and read a letter from one of her students. The student, after hearing a discussion about the SRO, wrote a letter and got all the students to sign it. The letter is for a request of one or more police officers. As a teacher and a parent, the resource officer was one that my children could always speak to, look up to, and he is familiar. It makes the officers more approachable because they are used to seeing an officer in the school. It was an asset that we had an SRO in our school. If the town cannot afford an officer, why can’t we get uniformed Military to volunteer and stand at the entrance.

Mayor: Five years ago we had this debate. I was a commissioner and the board did not agree until the parents appeared before them. We passed a resolution to have an SRO but we pulled the SRO because we lost a police officer. We have had staffing problems. The chief is a believer in an SRO. The Mayor believes every school should have an SRO. We will advocate an SRO but we will not be the only one to pay him. Sandy Hook Elementary did everything right. It had good security but the tragedy still took place. Officer Schelinder has been trained as an SRO. The Mayor strongly urged the other towns to help fund the officer. If each town and the county participated, it would not be such a big expense. If an SRO were present, he would be a deterrent. The Mayor said the next step is for the parents to attend all the other town board meetings, the county meeting and the school board meeting. This board is willing to work with the other towns to get an SRO into the school.

Commissioner Hunt: You are right, Mayor. You attend the Mayor’s Association Meetings. You need to have those mayors get their towns to contribute.

Lisa Chown: 104 Little Bay Cedar Point. She has two children at White Oak and one at Broad Creek. The newer school, Broad Creek, is more difficult to enter. You are “buzzed-in”. White Oak is very accessible and the cafeteria is close to the main road.

Mayor: We have left the door open to revisit this.

New Park Signs:

Vaughan Branch: 225 Bayshore Drive: He thanked the board for allowing him to speak. He stated that the board has his respect; but, it did not mean they have his confidence or his vote. He is here tonight to address the process in which the town put signs at the end of the street parks. He got home this weekend and saw the signs about the town ordinances and it rubbed him the wrong way. He doubts that we need more regulations from the federal, state or local government. He would like the town to follow Governor McCrory’s lead that taxpayers should be treated like customers and get their input before making decisions. He stated that the complaint from the resident, about the park, was never investigated and others were not asked. The board should not make laws for one or two people. He would like the board to revisit the issue and allow alcohol in the parks, but not “public drunkenness”. When he asked town staff what he would have to do to change the rules, he was told he would have to go through the planning board and would have to pay a fee. That discourages people to get involved. He asked the commissioners if they would think about changing that process, too. Commissioner Seegers said all the parks have the same sign posted. He stated that neither local, nor state and federal agencies allow alcohol in parks. Mr. Branch asked the board, does the town have to do what others do? Commissioner Seegers and Saunders said they would not be in favor of changing the policy.

(Side note from clerk: Mr. Branch read from a script and the clerk asked if she could have a copy to enter into the minutes and he refused.)

Announcements

Commissioner Patterson: The town has changed the website name from .com to .org:
www.townofcapecarteret.org

The clerk stated that one could find the town on Facebook, too. All updates about the pick-up and other important news are placed on Facebook.

The Mayor stated that since July 31, 2012 the town has had four pick-ups. The first pick-up was due to Hurricane Sandy at a cost of \$8,400. It takes about 14 days for the men to pick up the debris. Do not put the debris out a month in advance. Please place the debris on the right-of-way on the weekend noted.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. on a motion by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner King. ***Vote approved 5-0***

These are the minutes of January 14, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. Zornes, NCCMC
Town Clerk