

CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Workshop

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 - 3:30 PM

Council Chambers, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

PRESENT

Mayor Lynn Barbee

Mayor Pro Tem Jay Healy

Council Member Joe Benson

Council Member Mike Hoffer

Council Member Deb LeCompte

ALSO PRESENT

Town Manager Bruce Oakley

Assistant Town Manager Ed Parvin

Finance Director Debbie Hall

Town Clerk Kim Ward

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Employee Recognition

Planning Director Jeremy Hardison introduced new Planner Haley Moccia.

2. Committee Presentations

Council-appointed committees gave presentations for 2022. Mayor Barbee gave some history about the operation of committees. He said the presentations are the result of an effort to help the groups become more efficient and transparent.

Assistant Town Manager Ed Parvin said making sure committees were heading in the right direction has been a significant challenge. He said the code governing them was outdated, so the goal is to get everybody back on track and facilitate flexibility and better communication.

Lynn Conto of the Police Advisory Committee reported the group's proposed mission, proposed vision statement, goals for 2022, future goals, and 2022 meeting calendar. She said the committee is a volunteer group that brings together the community and Police personnel to exchange ideas, promote public safety, and assist in educating our community for a better understanding of the respective responsibilities of our Police and citizens.

Council Member Hoffer said he has no constructive criticism for the Police Advisory Committee because what and who it is seems to be straightforward.

Council Member LeCompte said there was some concern about people thinking the Police Advisory Committee is policy-driven rather than an advocacy/liaison group. She said the committee does not tell the Police Chief how to run the Police Department but instead helps to facilitate the department's face to the community.

Mayor Barbee noted the amount of interest in serving on the Police Advisory Committee. Council Member LeCompte said if there are only 8 members currently, the committee may want to add a standing member so there is an odd number. She said she will take this to the February meeting and ask the members how they feel about it and bring the issue back to Council.

Cindy Dunn of the Beautification Committee reported the group's history, mission, vision, and 2022 goals. She said the committee serves to enhance the quality of life in our community through the planning and management of the Town's municipal valuable landscape and public open space assets. Ms. Dunn said the committee's goals involve community appearance, development of a master beautification plan, and creation of an awards program for businesses.

Mayor Pro Tem Healy said the Beautification Committee started as ad hoc but later became a standing committee. He said the members are hands-on, often using rakes, shovels, and elbow grease to complete projects.

Mayor Barbee said he thinks the mission and vision for each committee should be reviewed by Town Attorney Noel Fox so she can give feedback.

Ricky Niec of the Bike/Pedestrian Committee reported the group's mission statement and goals for 2022. He said the committee, which began in June 2018, is requesting that Council change it from ad hoc to standing.

Town Manager Bruce Oakley explained that an ad hoc committee is purpose-driven with a single task, such as creating a master plan, but since then the committee has gone beyond that goal to tackle various ongoing efforts.

ACTION: Motion to convert the current ad hoc Bike/Pedestrian Committee and all their members to a standing committee

Motion made by Council Member Hoffer

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem Healy, Council Member Benson, Council Member Hoffer, Council Member LeCompte

Motion passed unanimously

Mr. Niec said the remaining 2022 goals involve working with the Town and other entities to complete projects. Mayor Barbee said committees don't work with Town staff but instead make recommendations to Council. Mr. Niec said he will change the wording of the goals to reflect this.

Mr. Niec said some committee items are unbudgeted and asked if the committee should bring these requests through Council Member Hoffer, the committee liaison. Mayor Barbee said yes.

Council Member LeCompte gave a quick report on the Centennial Committee, which followed a more detailed presentation by Maureen Lewis at Council's January meeting. The mission of the committee is to honor the past and present of Carolina Beach and inspire its continued growth and prosperity into the next century. Council Member LeCompte also reviewed the committee's 2022 goals.

Mayor Barbee said it was a mistake to not record the Centennial Committee meetings because he learned so much from them. Council Member LeCompte said Elaine Henson of the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society is part of the committee and starts each meeting with a 15- to 20-minute presentation on the history of Carolina Beach.

Council Member LeCompte said any money requested by the Centennial Committee would be in the 2024-2025 budget season.

Duke Hagestrom of the Parks and Recreation Committee reported the group's mission, vision, and membership. He said the committee creates community through people, parks, and programs. Mr. Hagestrom said because the committee works so closely with one Town department, budget questions are straightforward. He also reviewed 2021 accomplishments, the focus for 2022, the master plan, and projects that look to the future.

Council Member Benson said the Town may hear from Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point (MOTSU) soon about where they stand on a land transfer. Mr. Parvin said on or around January 28, MOTSU plans to give the Town direction on whether MOTSU will move forward with opportunities for that type of activity to occur, so the Town is hoping for good news. He said even if MOTSU says yes, it will still be years before easements are put in place.

Council Member LeCompte said quality of life starts with Parks and Recreation offerings, which are a huge asset to this island. Mr. Hagestrom credited passionate volunteers for their efforts.

Mayor Pro Tem Healy said the Parks and Recreation master plan relies on the lake dredge, so it will be great to see those two pieces come together and work out.

Paul Levy of the Operations Advisory Committee reported the group's vision, mission, goals, and measures. He said the committee supports balancing our unique coastal attributes and a healthy ecosystem through forward thinking and sustainable services that connect families, businesses, and visitors.

Mayor Barbee said most of the communication Council receives from the public involves Operations issues, and usually a simple answer is sufficient to alleviate concerns. He asked Mr. Levy if committee members see themselves as being a liaison to offer education to the community. Mr. Levy said a Town Public Information Officer (PIO), which the committee is advocating for as one of its goals, would be helpful to communicate Operations needs, goals, progress, and rationale to the community. Mayor

Barbee said Council Members have discussed creating a Town PIO position, but advocating for it and finding it in the budget are two different things, so this should be a healthy discussion during budget proceedings. He said the Town should develop champions outside of Council and staff. Mr. Levy said the Town needs more organized information.

Also among the goals for the Operations Advisory Committee is advocating for the development of a multi-modal transportation plan (MMTP). Mr. Levy said the committee is in favor of an MMTP because it ties into the group's vision and mission. He said the committee's concern is that demand will overwhelm the Town under current transportation and parking models, so an MMTP can be a roadmap to help solve issues.

Butch LeCompte, also of the Operations Advisory Committee, gave more details about the proposed MMTP, including a review of common issues shared by successful communities that experience rapid growth and popularity. He said the proposed MMTP, dubbed Carolina Beach in Motion, focuses on reducing congestion, increasing safety everywhere, and encouraging all types of mobility. Mr. LeCompte shared research the committee did on how other coastal municipalities across the country dealt with growth from 2010 to 2020. He said the committee is asking Council to approve moving forward with an MMTP.

Council Member Benson said the Town would typically pay a lot for the information compiled and presented by the committee, so he thanked the members for their volunteer work.

Mayor Barbee said he hopes any of the committee items with budgetary impact will come up in Council budget sessions later in the week. He said the goal of these sessions is prioritization and focus.

Mayor Barbee asked Mr. Oakley to reach out to the Town Manager in Nags Head.

Council Member LeCompte said an MMTP was mentioned multiple times in the Land Use Plan, so it's part of the vision brought forward when the plan was adopted in 2020.

Mr. LeCompte asked if Council would make a motion to approve an MMTP. Council Members indicated they were not yet ready to move forward with this, so there was no motion.

3. Adopt a Resolution Supporting Financial Obligations Associated with the Marina Bulkhead

Mr. Parvin said the marina bulkhead project is out to bid now, and while Council received Golden Leaf Foundation grant funding of over \$2 million for the project, the total cost estimate is over \$3 million, leaving a shortfall of over \$1 million. He said Council needs to pass a resolution that the Town commits to funding the full project, whether it comes from loans, room occupancy tax funds, the budget, or other means.

Mr. Oakley said the Town can do some value engineering to get the cost down, but it won't change significantly.

Mayor Barbee asked Mr. Oakley where he thinks the Town will get the shortfall. Mr. Oakley said American Rescue Plan funds are a possibility for completing the project. Mayor Barbee said he doesn't want this to result in increased property taxes.

ACTION: Motion to approve Ordinance 22-1168, an ordinance supporting financial obligations associated with the marina bulkhead

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem Healy, Council Member Benson, Council Member Hoffer, Council Member LeCompte

Motion passed unanimously

ACTION: Motion to approve Resolution 22-2251, a resolution supporting financial obligations associated with the marina bulkhead

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem Healy, Council Member Benson, Council Member Hoffer, Council Member LeCompte

Motion passed unanimously

4. Appoint Alternate Representative to the Wilmington MPO

Mayor Barbee, who is the Council representative to the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO), said he recently found out Council may appoint an alternate representative who can vote in his place if he's unavailable.

ACTION: Motion to nominate Council Member LeCompte as the alternate

Motion made by Council Member Benson

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem Healy, Council Member Benson, Council Member Hoffer, Council Member LeCompte

Motion passed unanimously

5. Discuss Agenda Items for February Council Meeting

Council discussed items for the February meeting agenda. Mayor Barbee said the purpose is to give staff direction and more time to be prepared.

Mayor Barbee said with the season starting in March, he would like to see Operations do a readiness review of maintenance items around the Boardwalk.

Mayor Barbee and Council Member LeCompte also brought up some parking inventory issues, and Mayor Barbee said if taking care of these requires changes to rules then this should be done soon.

Council Member LeCompte said the porta-potties at beach accesses look awful. Mr. Oakley said he doesn't know the history of these. Mayor Barbee suggested he talk to staff about why they are there and said if staff wants to get rid of them, then come back to Council for approval if it's needed.

Council Member LeCompte asked if the Tennessee Avenue handicapped beach access is waiting for beach nourishment. Mr. Oakley said yes.

Mayor Barbee said if there is still work to be done on beach access damage from the spring tide event, that should be added to the readiness plan.

Council Member LeCompte asked if there is a date for beach nourishment. Mr. Parvin said there is not a specific date yet, but it should be late February/early March.

Mayor Barbee said the last time beach nourishment was done, there was some public education. Council Member Benson gave some details about what happened in the past and said it would be useful to do something similar again.

Council Member Benson said he would like to hear an update about Public Works Director Brian Stanberry scoping out project costs for mitigating tidal intrusion flooding on Canal Drive street ends.

Council Member Benson said he'd also like a report on the lake dredge and whether the Town has to go back out to bid or if the project scope can be trimmed and sent back to the original bidder.

Mayor Barbee said he'd like a general update on the lake dredge.

Mayor Barbee said it's a good idea for people to learn as much as possible about beach nourishment because it's so complicated. Mr. Parvin said in the past there was a tool that showed specifically when and where work would be done, so advertising that tool would be beneficial.

Council Member Hoffer said he'd like an update on a safe crossing at South Lake Park Boulevard and Spartanburg Avenue. He said he wants to talk to N.C. Department Transportation (DOT) representatives about it and explore requests.

Mayor Barbee said he would like to hear any updates on DOT projects.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: Motion to adjourn

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem Healy, Council Member Benson, Council Member Hoffer, Council Member LeCompte

Motion passed unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.