

CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 9, 2025 - 6:00 PM

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



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, followed by the invocation by Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte and Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Mayor Lynn Barbee
Mayor Pro Tem Deb LeCompte
Council Member Jay Healy
Council Member Joe Benson
Council Member Mike Hoffer

ALSO PRESENT

Town Manager Bruce Oakley
Deputy Town Manager Ed Parvin
Finance Director Debbie Hall
Town Clerk Kim Ward
Town Attorney Noel Fox

ADOPT THE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte said she noticed there is a budget transfer for a facilities study and asked when that will be done. Mr. Oakley said it should be completed in December.

ACTION: Motion to adopt the agenda

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

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

Motion passed unanimously

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Budget Amendments for Carryovers
2. Budget Amendments and Transfers
3. Set a Public Hearing for October 14, 2025, to Consider a Rezoning at 205 Cape Fear Boulevard from Mixed Use (MX) to Central Business District (CBD)
Applicant: Cori McQueen
4. Adopt a Resolution of Support for WMPO Transportation Block Grant
5. Water Quality Planning Grant
6. Amend Chapter 16, Section 16-2 Town Identification Decal

7. ROT Reimbursement Approval Request

ACTION: Motion to adopt the consent agenda

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

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

Motion passed unanimously

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

8. Centennial Committee Recognition

Council honored Elaine Henson with a plaque for her service as local historian and contributions to the Centennial Committee, formed in 2020. Mayor Barbee also read a proclamation recognizing each member of the Centennial Committee for their outstanding service, volunteerism, and commitment to making the celebration a memorable experience for all.

9. Events Update by Tim Murphy

Community Services Manager Tim Murphy reviewed upcoming events:

- Dragon Boat Regatta – September 13 at Boat Basin
- Bike Rodeo – September 14 at Rec Center
- Community Blood Drive – September 17 at Rec Center
- The Savannah Boats Classic King Mackerel Fishing Tournament – September 26-27 (tournament headquarters is The Silver Dollar)
- Market at the Lake – continues every Saturday through October 4
- Pets in the Park – October 5 at Lake Park (will include a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Rainbow Bridge)
- Pink Tide 5K – October 18 at Lake Park (Tammy Messercola from the American Cancer Society gave details)
- Fresh & Raw Tour – October 18 at Shuckin' Shack
- Tour de Island – October 18 beginning at Mike Chappell Park

Council Member Healy said he received positive feedback about the 13 concerts held this summer and praised organizers.

Council Member Benson asked if the amusement ride managers are planning any additional events at the Gazebo. Mr. Murphy said they are done for the season, and the Gazebo area will become a laydown yard for the bathroom construction project and will be tied up for a while.

10. Manager's Update

Mr. Oakley gave an update on various projects:

- Stormwater scoping and clearing: These inspections were predominantly funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and cleaning of drainage pipes identified as needing attention is underway and about 50% complete. Most were in good shape.

- Boardwalk bathrooms: Mobilization begins in September, and completion is targeted for spring 2026. There may be some inconveniences, but they are doing their best to make sure everything flows.
- Lake Park bathrooms: A pre-fabricated replacement facility is scheduled to begin installation in October.
- Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM)/Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) maintenance dredging: This is scheduled to begin in November.

Council Member Hoffer said that while the new Lake Park bathrooms are being installed, the old facility will stay up, so there will be no interruption.

Mayor Barbee asked if the old facility will be torn down or repurposed. Mr. Oakley said it will be torn down because it's beyond its lifespan.

Mayor Hoffer said the bridge near the Lake Park bathrooms is a congestion point and asked staff to look into improvements.

Council Member Benson said after dredging passes the North End, with the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) permit open it will be a good time to raise and backfill the rocks. Mr. Oakley said they are planning to do any restacking and backfilling that is needed.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte asked about the public meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the dredging project. Mr. Oakley said staff will let the public know as soon as it's scheduled, which should be sometime in October.

Community Development Director Jeremy Hardison reported the following recent developments:

- 98 permits issued for renovation/repair/additions, etc., 12 residential new construction permits, and 6 certificates of occupancy
- Code Enforcement: 84 complaints received; of those, 1 was determined to be not related to Code Enforcement, 34 were resolved, 25 were issued violation letters, and 24 were open
- Demolitions: 215 Peninsula Drive (single-family home), 1616 Snapper Lane (mobile home), 1610 Swordfish Lane (mobile home), 105 Dow Road South (Seaside Chapel building), 1513 Bonito Lane (mobile home), 1604 Bonito Lane (mobile home/house moving)
- New businesses: Nest Realty, 1000 North Lake Park Boulevard Suite 131, and Embody Movement + Wellness, 1000 North Lake Park Boulevard Suite 175

Mr. Hardison reported the following past and upcoming meetings:

- Planning and Zoning Commission September 11: 205 Cape Fear Boulevard rezoning from MX to CBD
- Technical Review Committee (TRC) September 2: Conditional Zoning hotel 223-239 Carolina Beach Avenue North, Fishers Reserve Phase 2 1215 Saint Joseph Street, beach cleanup baskets, Harbor Master office
- Board of Adjustment September 15: right-of-way materials appeal 101 Delaware Avenue
- Council October 14: Wilson Avenue one-way ordinance

Council Member Benson asked if there was anything to report from today's kickoff meeting regarding the N.C. Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP) grant. Mr. Hardison said it was an initial overview of the process and stages, and staff will need to meet with its engineering firm and put together a working committee for the plan, which will come back before Council. Mr. Parvin said today's meeting was statewide and meant to introduce all the engineers working with the different communities, so it was more of a listening session.

Mayor Barbee asked about the grant the Town is seeking for a sidewalk from Carolina Sands southward. Mr. Hardison said it will be awarded at the October Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Captain Dave Tilley requested that the Town change its ordinance that prohibits baiting fish in the Town Marina. He proposed that fishing be allowed in the Marina for licensees, including their captains, mates, and those under direct supervision, citing the economic benefit of the local charter fishing industry.

Lynn Conto of 707 Magnolia Avenue said she opposed the operation of a Pedal Pub in the Town, citing congestion, safety, lack of originality, and negative impact on residents.

Mayor Barbee suggested that staff look into the history of the ordinance prohibiting fishing in the Town Marina and what the concerns were. Council gave consensus for staff to explore the possibility of changing the ordinance. Mr. Oakley said they will come back to Council on this matter.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

11. Consider Approving a Commercial Pedal Vehicle Operation
Applicant: Cory Emerine

In 2018, Council adopted an ordinance authorizing commercial pedal vehicles subject to Council approval. The ordinance establishes standards for:

- Alcohol consumption
- Vehicle appearance
- Insurance requirements
- Operational and safety measures

The ordinance further requires the business location, passenger meeting area, loading, and storage to be located on private property in approved areas and prohibits travel through R-2 and R-3 zoning districts, except on Harper Avenue unless otherwise approved by Council.

Applicant Cory Emerine requests approval to operate one 15-passenger pedal vehicle within the public streets of the Town.

Tour operations

- Two-hour tours beginning and ending at Good Hops Brewing
- Route: Good Hops → Harper Avenue → Third Street → Cape Fear Boulevard → Boardwalk

- Dropoff: 20 minutes at the end of Cape Fear Boulevard; vehicle stages at Raleigh Avenue loading zone
- Thursday summer nights: alternate dropoff location proposed due to Cape Fear Boulevard closure
- Continue to SeaWitch Café via Canal Drive → Carolina Beach Avenue North → SeaWitch parking lot dropoff
- Return trip to Good Hops

Hours of operation

- Individual seats: 5:30 -10:00 PM Sunday-Thursday and until midnight Friday and Saturday
- Full bike reservations: available daily beginning at 10:00 AM

Storage and access

- Vehicle will be stored at a private facility on Dow Road.
- Vehicle will travel via Eighth Street to Good Hops without passengers or amplification.

Mr. Hardison presented the details. He said the staff recommendation is as follows:

- Travel on Eighth Street from the mini storage to Good Hops (no music or passengers)
- Allow dropoffs on Harper Avenue
- Park using the loading zone at Raleigh Avenue or the Marina

Mr. Emerine, franchise owner of the Wilmington Pedal Pub, said 75% of their business is bachelorette parties. He gave specifics about the rides, which can be done with or without alcohol, explaining that passengers would bring their own drinks (no hard liquor or glass), and each person would be allowed to consume no more than three alcoholic beverages per two-hour ride. Mr. Emerine said the Pedal Pub drives tourism, resident engagement, and revenue to the local economy and small businesses. He said the vehicle travels a maximum of 10 mph and described safety measures within their operation. Mr. Emerine said they are open to different hours of operation.

Council Member Healy asked if the Pedal Pub currently operates in a place like Carolina Beach. Mr. Emerine said there is an operation in a Florida beach town as well as several big cities, including Nashville and Savannah, and one planned in Myrtle Beach. He said the bikes do not impede traffic any more than a golf cart, and if they get more than three cars behind them they pull over to let traffic pass. Mr. Emerine added that drivers always have control of the music and volume, and he said they are open to an alternate route or not operating at all during the summer weekly fireworks shows.

Mayor Barbee pointed out that the proposed route starts in the industrial zone, goes through R-3, R-2, and R-1, passing one of the larger island churches, and then proceeds from MX into CBD.

Council Member Hoffer said plans to make Canal Drive near the Boardwalk a one-way street could affect this proposal.

Mayor Barbee questioned uncertainty about SeaWitch's future as to whether it will be a place for passenger dropoff. Mr. Hardison said he thinks they will operate at least another summer.

Mayor Barbee asked if approval tonight would be for one year. Mr. Hardison said approval does not have a time limit and would be in effect unless the applicant is found to be in violation of any ordinance requirement. He said they would be bound to the proposed route and times unless they come back before Council.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte said this isn't limited to the CBD and would go through residential areas for the majority of the trip, so the potential for noise concerns her.

Council Member Healy said there was a similar proposal that came to Council seven years ago and it was denied, and he wanted to know the reasons. Mr. Hardison said they wanted to travel down Lake Park Boulevard, and that was the major reason for opposition. Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte said the Police Department was not on board with that.

Council Member Hoffer said the main issue for the Town is congestion and dealing with growth. He said he is not going to support this proposal because ordinances say vehicles must be able to keep up with traffic.

Mayor Barbee said low-speed vehicles (LSVs) have a minimum speed of 20 mph. He said he thinks the applicant has a legitimate offering and he's not against what they are trying to do, but for him it's a geography problem of so much being compressed into a small space. Mayor Barbee said he can't vote for anything going through residential zones.

ACTION: Motion to deny the request to operate a Pedal Pub in Carolina Beach

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte

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

Motion passed unanimously

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte reflected on her service as the Council liaison to the Centennial Committee and expressed pride in the group's accomplishments.

Council Member Healy requested further review of Town noise ordinances, specifically for vehicle mufflers. Mayor Barbee said a resident has complained about vehicular noise in the middle of the night.

Council Member Benson said a traffic-calming petition for Portside Village is coming Thursday.

Council Member Hoffer said he attended the BikeWalk NC Transportation Summit in Hickory and announced that Carolina Beach will host the 2026 event. He highlighted the importance of reducing speed limits for pedestrian safety and advocated making Ocean Boulevard 25 mph from the Greenway to the water.

Mayor Barbee thanked the Centennial Committee for exceptional service and emphasized the success of the celebrations. He said the Town should be proud, and they raised the bar for everybody.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barbee adjourned the meeting at 7:05 PM.