

CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Workshop

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 - 9:00 AM

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



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Appropriate Match for N.C. Department of Transportation Bike & Ped Plan FY24
2. Appropriate Remaining HVAC Loan Funds to Debt Service FY23

Council Member Hoffer said he was excited to see item 1.

ACTION: Motion to approve the consent agenda

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Discussion Regarding North Carolina Avenue Traffic Patterns and Surrounding Bike Path Routes

Council and staff discussed options for the intersections on North Carolina Avenue and nearby bicycle routes. The purpose was to provide staff direction on any changes to traffic patterns on and around North Carolina Avenue.

Mr. Oakley said residents recently voiced concerns about stop signs in the Seagrove area and other parts of the Town.

Mayor Barbee said as bicyclists and pedestrians proceed west from Lake Park Boulevard, they go through several four-way stop signs before reaching two intersections with active cross-traffic. He said at that point bicyclists and pedestrians are not expecting cars to cross, which causes near-misses. Mayor Barbee said the last two streets should be four-way stops for consistency.

Council Member LeCompte said the street connects the beach to the Greenway, so it's highly traveled. She said she likes the idea of four-way stops and high-visibility stop bars.

Mayor Barbee asked about the cost. Mr. Oakley said painting stop bars in conjunction with a crosswalk would be \$900 per intersection, and using thermoplastic paint would increase the cost to \$2,000 per intersection. Public Works Director Brian Stanberry said the thermoplastic option may be less if the Town uses it at multiple intersections. He said it lasts longer and is more reflective than regular paint, which could be done internally but would pose maintenance issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Healy suggested using stop signs first to see how that works. Council Member LeCompte said she likes this idea.

Council Member Hoffer said he doesn't think crosswalks are necessary and asked about the cost for just stop bars with thermoplastic paint. Mr. Stanberry said this would be about \$500.

Mayor Barbee said he would like to see stop bars investigated further.

Council Member LeCompte said residents in the area of Greenville Avenue between 5th and 6th streets would like to have back the stop sign that was recently removed. She said there was a bad accident at that corner a few months ago.

Council Member Hoffer said he is in favor of stop bars to highlight stop signs in key places, and he urged the Town to implement this solution quickly. He said this should have been done years ago.

ACTION: Motion to convert any non-four-way stops on North Carolina Avenue between Lake Park Boulevard and the bike path to four-way stops

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

Mayor Barbee said Council Member Hoffer will work with Bike/Ped Committee to come up with a list of proposed stop bar locations to be presented, discussed, and voted upon during a future meeting.

4. Discuss Property Lease at 3 Carolina Beach Avenue South

Council reviewed the current lease for the Town-owned property at 3 Carolina Beach Avenue South. The purpose was to provide staff direction on the renewal of the lease that is set to expire on January 1, 2024.

Mr. Oakley said at the last meeting there was discussion about the Ferris wheel and supporting elements on the property, which the Town bought in 2019. He said in 2020 the Town was considering purchasing the adjacent tract where the mini golf course was, but after the COVID-19 pandemic started the Town decided not to pursue this and the property was instead purchased by Carolina Beach Land Holdings, LLC. Mr. Oakley said everyone seems to be pleased with the Ferris wheel on that private property, so Council asked for options at the last meeting to allow the Town-owned property to continue to also be used for the Ferris wheel.

3 Carolina Beach Avenue South property options:

1. Enter into a new lease for less than a year or until September.
2. Enter into a new lease of Town lot beyond a year. The term of the lease can be greater than a year but not longer than 10 years if Council determines the property will not be needed by the Town for the term of the lease. This option will require a published 30-day notice to the public that includes the terms of the lease, including rental or lease payments, and will have to be adopted at a regular Council meeting.
3. The parties could execute an encroachment agreement for the Ferris wheel support apparatus.
4. The parties could exchange equal pieces of real property.
5. An offer to purchase the property could be presented to the Town. If the offer is accepted, it would be subject to the upset bid requirements defined in North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS).

*Conditional Zoning (CZ) will need to be applied and approved by Council for continued operation of amusements/rides on this property.

Mr. Oakley said Carolina Beach Land Holdings prefers option 2. He asked Council for a vote to work with the property owner to pursue one of these options, not to enter into an agreement at this point.

ACTION: Motion to direct the Town Manager to put out public notice to discuss the lease option consistent with NCGS 160A-272

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

5. Manager's Update

Mr. Oakley gave an update on various projects:

- 47% available fund balance (\$9.5 million): The audit is being finalized and will be presented in November.
- Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) revenue \$403,000: The Town will receive this additional profit at the end of October.
- ABC e-bike grant: This will allow the Police Department to purchase two e-bikes for patrol.

- Brandy Myers Memorial Playground groundbreaking: November 2 at 10:00 AM.
- Carolina Beach Avenue North paving project: This project, which was done with a direct grant from the State, resulted in some areas where multi-meter boxes that serve condos were lowered. The Town is working to get these raised.

Mr. Stanberry gave an update on additional projects:

- Starfish: Stormwater modification today.
- Scotch Bonnet: Bulkhead designed, and Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) permit pending.
- Clam Shell: Survey requested.
- Captain’s Quarters/Canal: Survey to be scheduled.
- Florida Avenue: CAMA permit application forthcoming.
- Streetlights: A new test light will be up on Harper Avenue later today. Council Members will look and it and give feedback so staff can move forward.

Regarding Lake Park Boulevard paving, Mr. Oakley said staff met with engineers from Kimley-Horn, who will set up a meeting with the N.C. Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss options. He said the goal is to get a plan to DOT before they get to the paving stage.

Mayor Pro Tem Healy asked about the status of possible changes in regulations for downtown sidewalk cafes. Mr. Oakley said staff is finalizing a draft of proposed new regulations, and the Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce will share this with business owners. Mr. Parvin said the Chamber is hosting a meeting about the proposed regulations at Town Hall on November 9 at 10:00 AM. Town staff will be there to answer questions and listen to comments.

Regarding the sidewalk on Lake Park Boulevard, Mr. Oakley said DOT has done the survey, and staff is waiting for them to finish the plan so they can work together on encroachment agreements. He said for the Spartanburg Avenue sidewalk, the Town’s engineer is doing the design phase, and then options will be presented to Council. Mayor Barbee said the residents he’s talked to about the Spartanburg sidewalk favor the southbound crossing over northbound so people aren’t walking through the Scotchman parking lot.

Mayor Barbee said in the area of Cape Fear Boulevard across from NAPA where the Town recently gave driveway permits, people are parking there and getting tickets because at night it looks like there are lines there. Mr. Parvin said staff has told parking enforcement not to issue tickets here, and the property is looking at narrowing the driveway design. He said the Town may be able to get a couple more public parking spaces here, but in the interim they will stay blacked out.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member LeCompte said she recently talked to Mr. Oakley about cleaning up the landscape around the Community Building and allowing the Carolina Beach Mural Project to do a centennial timeline mural around it. Council gave consensus to move forward with this. Council Member Hoffer asked about the condition of the building and if there is a long-term plan for it. Mr. Oakley said it needs some care. Council Member LeCompte said the building has historic value because it was built to be the public library, and kids sold bricks to fund construction. She said it needs to be preserved as part of Town history, and things shouldn’t be knocked down just because they’re old. Mr. Oakley said a

discussion about what the Town can do to upgrade the building may be part of the upcoming budget retreat.

Mayor Pro Tem Healy reminded everyone about the election on November 7 and urged people to vote.

Council Member Benson asked if the first phase of the lake dredge project is still scheduled to be completed next month. Mr. Oakley said the contractor has encountered a troublesome area that has taken longer than expected, but the Town is working to ensure delays are minimal.

Council Member Benson asked if the Town has any needs to discuss with State Rep. Charlie Miller following the recent approval of a State budget. Mr. Oakley said the Town will push for any water infrastructure funds it can get.

Council Member Hoffer said paving needs should come before stop bars, so he asked staff to keep that in mind.

Mayor Barbee encouraged voters to talk to candidates about their views instead of believing what others say.

Council Member LeCompte said she has invited all candidates to come to her meet-and-greet event at Good Hops Brewing this evening. She urged voters to make themselves informed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barbee adjourned the meeting at 10:02 AM.