

# CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Retreat

Friday, January 27, 2023— 9:00 AM

Fort Fisher Air Force Base 118 Riverfront Road Kure Beach, NC



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## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

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

Council Members Present

Mayor Lynn Barbee

Council Member Mike Hoffer

MPT Jay Healy

Council Member Deb LeCompte

Council Member Absent

Council Member Joe Benson (excused)

The Town Attorney and department heads were also present.

**Mayor Barbee made a motion to go into closed session to discuss a real estate matter in accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5). The property being discussed is Parcel ID# R08814-001-007-000. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Mayor Barbee made a motion to return to open session stating that no action was taken during the closed session. Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting facilitator asked Council to reflect and comment on yesterday's meeting. Below are some of the comments that Council mentioned:

- This Council is forward-thinking and has improved its learning curve and demonstrates amazing transparency.
- We still have more growing to do.
- I like the idea of having more meetings with the public and like how we are approaching our business.
- Like any team-building effort, it takes time for a group to gel.
- The public doesn't get to see all the projects we identified on our timeline.
- There are so many big projects underway, so much change.
- I value the continuity this Council offers.
- I have been considering how the Town can simplify and sustain our lives.

- I appreciate our working relationship between Council and staff. We're good at seeking solutions.

Council was asked to discuss some of the small projects that will be proposed in the upcoming budget. Their comments included:

- Crosswalk at Spartanburg is a priority of Council.
- Add handicapped parking spaces.
- Beautification Committee recommendations: How many and which ones to bring to Council? Concerns were expressed about feasibility of maintaining a planter at the town entrance (watering the plants.)
- Nonprofit funding should only go to organizations that perform services the Town would otherwise provide or that the ROT would fund. The Town has a policy and a process for considering these requests. The Manager was directed to ensure the benefit to Town is well articulated and demonstrated.

Ms. Henderson asked Council to discuss Town advisory boards. Some of the comments included:

- Advisory committees work best if they are clearly defined with time limits and directed to focus on the interests of the Town rather than those of individuals.
- Some committees should become nonprofits so they can raise funding for their projects.
- How can the town best use the brain power and passion of committee members?
- Employing term limits on committees encourages fresh ideas and discourages formation of social cliques.
- Council representatives to the committee should present the Council's perspective. Anything a Council Member says can be incorrectly received as the will of the Council.
- The Council should provide clear direction to boards and committees and hold them accountable for making progress and staying focused.

Ms. Henderson asked Council to discuss how they felt about interactions with staff.

- Ideas and inquiries expressed by a Council Member to staff do not equal a directive that expresses the will of the Council.
- The Manager knows to call an emergency meeting if Council directs staff to act in a way that contradicts or complicates the existing plan of action.
- Recognize that the Manager is the "filter" between Council's requests and staff.
- Staff asked that Council Members ask citizens to directly communicate their complaints to the responsible staff.
  - Committees ask staff directly for resources. They should be asking the Council liaison to convey their requests. Staff are supervised and directed by the Manager, and he should be informed of the requests.
- Staff asked Council to promote the use of the project page on the Town's website for updates. Sometimes Council Members seek detailed information without checking that resource first.

- Requests for information (RFI's) sometimes focus on minutia. It is hard for staff to devote time to respond to all requests. Council can be unaware of the time required to fully respond to inquiries.
- Mayor's advice is for Council Members to share accomplishments -to-date on projects, not to convey future timelines (or make promises) since circumstances can be subject to change.
- Council requests need to go through the Manager. Avoid direct contact with staff, that disrespects the chain of command.

Mayor Barbee adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.