

CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Workshop

Tuesday, September 22, 2026 - 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 Deb LeCompte

Council Member Jay Healy

Council Member Wayne Rouse

Council Member Vince Losito

ALSO PRESENT

Town Manager Bruce Oakley

Deputy Town Manager Ed Parvin

Finance Director Debbie Hall

Town Clerk Kim Ward

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Employee Recognition

Recognition of Keith Pfeifle – 5-Year Service Milestone

Public Utilities Director Mark Meyer recognized Keith Pfeifle for completing five years of service with the Town. Mr. Meyer praised Mr. Pfeifle's work ethic, adaptability, and positive attitude at the wastewater treatment plant, noting that finding reliable staff for that facility is particularly challenging. He also highlighted Mr. Pfeifle's progress toward earning professional classifications and his dependability during hurricane events.

Recognition of Sheila Nicholson – 15-Year Service Milestone

Mr. Oakley recognized Sheila Nicholson for 15 years with the Town, describing her as an "unsung hero" whose contributions span executive assistance, contract management, IT support, and front-line customer service. He said Ms. Nicholson had recently taken on expanded public information responsibilities, stepping up voluntarily.

Mayor Barbee noted this potentially saved the Town the cost of hiring a dedicated communications staff member.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte credited Ms. Nicholson's work on the Town's Facebook page as a key driver of improved public communications.

Council Member Rouse shared a firsthand account of Ms. Nicholson simultaneously managing multiple complex tasks – including assisting a Council Member with a Town cell phone, working with a vendor, and greeting first-time visitors to Carolina Beach – all with consistent professionalism and warmth.

2. Northend Flood Mitigation Alliance Update

Resolution of Support and Completed Projects

Mr. Oakley noted a resolution of support – Resolution No. 26-2359 – was before the Council. He summarized that since 2022, the Town has completed approximately \$1.5 million in bulkhead and stormwater-related projects, with an additional \$500,000 in projects currently underway, alongside a Town-wide stormwater assessment and an ongoing stormwater study.

Mayor Barbee asked for a status update on the bulkhead projects listed in the materials. Mr. Parvin clarified that all projects on the list are funded and in progress, with the exception of the Delaware Avenue bulkhead, which is not currently in the budget. He noted that this may be eligible for grant funding or potentially the N.C. Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP).

Public Works Director Brian Stanberry addressed Council Member Healy's question about bulkhead cost variability, explaining that pricing depends heavily on site conditions, stormwater pipe integration, and scope of work – ranging from repair jobs to full new installations.

Council Member Rouse requested that Mr. Oakley work with Town Attorney Noel Fox to explore whether an ordinance could be enacted establishing a minimum bulkhead height – applicable to both new installations and repairs – referencing the APTIM study and the Northend Flood Mitigation Alliance's (NFMA's) own recommended height of 5.75 feet. Mr. Oakley agreed to follow up with Ms. Fox.

ACTION: Motion to approve Resolution No. 26-2359

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

Save Our Basin Project — Oyster Reef Restoration

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte introduced a project called Save Our Basin, a collaboration between NFMA, N.C. Coastal Federation, and the Town. The project aims to establish oyster beds on spoil islands within the harbor to support natural water filtration and shoreline stabilization.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte explained that during permitting research, it was discovered that a small portion of the larger spoil island, visible as a small hooked section on survey Map 164, is classified as submerged land belonging to the Town. This finding changed the permitting pathway: Rather than proceeding solely through the state, NFMA Chair Stephen Taylor now needs to be named as an authorized agent for the Town in order to apply for the general permit.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte clarified that the oysters would not be edible, as they are in a polluted area, but would serve an important environmental function.

ACTION: Motion to direct the Town Manager to appoint an agent for Save Our Basin

Motion made by Council Member Rouse

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

Mayor Barbee asked for details about how the project would work.

Mr. Taylor explained that the general permit lasts 120 days, covers a planned 120-foot section of shoreline stabilization using bagged recycled oyster shells, and will require over 2,000 bushels of shell material. He described the broader project timeline: Shell collection would begin in October through January or February, with N.C. Coastal Federation supplying shells collected via local recycling bins. The actual construction – building a two- or three-level oyster reef structure along the channel-facing side of the island – would be carried out in a concentrated one- to two-week period once materials and logistics are in place. Mr. Taylor encouraged community volunteer involvement.

3. Project Update

RCCP – Phase 1 and 2

Community Development Director Jeremy Hardison reported that the RCCP plan is in its final stages. The State-funded program – focused on identifying strategies to reduce coastal flooding impacts – recently held a well-attended public meeting; 19 coastal resilience strategies were presented, and a public survey remains open through Friday to gather community input. Mr. Hardison noted that staff will refine the strategies based on public comments and bring a final presentation to Council within the following month or so.

Saint Joseph Street Multi-Use Path

Mr. Hardison noted that all planning, engineering, and design work is complete. The project is now awaiting construction authorization and release of funding from the N.C. Department of Transportation (DOT). Once that authorization is received, the project will go out to bid, with a contract award anticipated at either the December or January Council meeting, and construction is targeted to begin in January.

Council Member Healy raised a separate concern about illegal dumping at the end of Saint Joseph Street, specifically landscaping debris being left in the wetlands. Police Chief Vic Ward responded that a suspect has been identified and the matter is under investigation.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte noted that the recent NC BikeWalk Transportation Summit, co-hosted by Carolina Beach and Kure Beach, included both a walk audit and bike audit of Town streets and paths, including Saint Joseph Street. Results and recommendations from those audits will be presented by the Bike/Ped Committee at a future meeting. She noted that the Bike/Ped Committee had already begun discussing plans for a public open house in late October, as directed by Council.

Mayor Barbee said whatever e-bike and other mobility rules are developed, they should be coordinated and standardized with Kure Beach to avoid inconsistent rules across municipal boundaries.

Boardwalk Sidewalk Access — Hurricane Alley's Property

Mr. Oakley introduced a concern that arose during the summer season regarding a sidewalk along the Boardwalk area, adjacent to Hurricane Alley's. He noted the Town received complaints that tables and chairs placed in that area had effectively blocked public pedestrian access, creating a pinch point with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), public safety, and emergency access implications.

Mr. Hardison presented a historical overview of the issue. The building was constructed in 1953, adjacent to a wooden boardwalk that the Town replaced with concrete in the 1970s. In 2012, when the property was sold and a renovation permit was sought, a survey revealed that the sidewalk area is private property; there is no Town easement. A small sliver of land on the eastern edge of the sidewalk is Town-owned, but the remainder belongs to the property owner. Staff brought the issue to Council at that time and recommended pursuing an easement, but Council directed staff to attempt to negotiate one voluntarily; that effort was unsuccessful. A permit for a deck was nonetheless issued, with only an informal, unrecorded agreement that a 5- to 7-foot walkway would remain unobstructed.

In 2014 and again in 2019, the property owner sought additional permits, a Conditional Use Permit and a rooftop bar modification. During the 2019 proceedings, staff again recommended requiring an easement as a condition; the property owner testified there were no plans to block the walkway, and Council ultimately did not require the easement as a condition of approval. This summer, tables and chairs appeared in that area, effectively obstructing the passage.

Council discussed the implications, noting that there are limited options for ADA accessibility in that area, especially during fireworks events.

Mayor Barbee said Mr. Oakley and Ms. Fox need to get together to figure out a path forward.

Council Member Rouse suggested giving Mr. Oakley the authority to negotiate and resolve the matter.

Mayor Barbee was careful to acknowledge the property owner's legal rights while emphasizing the urgency of resolving the issue before plans for the adjacent property acquisition move forward. He reviewed potential options: adverse possession, eminent domain, a voluntary easement negotiation with the property owner, rerouting the sidewalk around the property via an easement from the Marriott, or extending the sidewalk eastward from the portion owned by the Town.

Council gave consensus for Mr. Oakley and Ms. Fox to evaluate all available options and return with a recommendation.

Council Member Rouse summarized the consensus: Respect private property rights, pursue a voluntary easement if possible, and if not, design around the obstruction – while clearly delineating what is Town property versus private property so there is no ambiguity for pedestrian flow once the park project develops.

4. Proclamation Recognizing September 25 (9/25) as Dolly Parton Day

Mayor Barbee introduced Proclamation No. 26-2358, sharing a brief reflection on Dolly Parton's legacy – noting that upon her passing, public conversation focused almost entirely on her character and generosity rather than her professional accolades, an observation he found remarkable.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte read the Proclamation in full, proclaiming September 25 (9/25) as Dolly Parton Day in the Town and encouraging residents and visitors to celebrate her contributions to music, literacy, and community service by sharing kindness. She noted local community celebrations planned around the date, including a CB Trash Walkers group outing in pink attire and a full moon event at the Carolina Beach Pier.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barbee adjourned the meeting at 9:53 AM.