

Town of North Topsail Beach

Joann M. McDermon, Mayor
Mike Benson, Mayor Pro Tem

Aldermen:
Richard Grant
Connie Pletl
Alfred Fontana
Tom Leonard



Alice Derian, ICMA-CM
Town Manager

Nancy Avery
Interim Town Clerk

Nature's Tranquil Beauty

Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting minutes Wednesday, January 4, 2023, at 11:00 AM North Topsail Beach Town Hall

The Town of North Topsail Beach Board of Aldermen held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 4, 2023. There was a quorum of the Board present and the Town Attorney was in attendance.

Board members present: Mayor Joann McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem Mike Benson
Aldermen: Connie Pletl, Fred Fontana, Tom Leonard, Richard Grant

Board members absent: None

Staff present: Finance Officer Caitlin Elliott, Fire Chief Chad Soward, Police Chief William Younginer, Planning Director Deborah J. Hill, IT Director Ricky Schwisow, Interim Town Clerk Nancy Avery, Town Manager Alice Derian and Town Attorney Brian Edes

Mayor McDermon called the meeting to order at 11 am. Mayor Pro Tem Benson gave the invocation and Mayor McDermon led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of agenda

Alderman Leonard requested addition of a new item (b) under New Business 'Legislative and CIP goals'.

Alderman Grant requested the finance report be taken off the Consent Agenda as there is an item on the agenda under New Business.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson requested removal of item 9a under Continuing Business as the BISAC committee has not met since the last meeting.

Mayor McDermon stated Topsail Island Shoreline and Protection goals need to be discussed but that can be done under the Legislative Goals items.

Motion - Alderman Grant motioned to adopt the agenda as amended with the addition of a new item under New Business, and removal of items under Consent Agenda and Continuing Business; seconded by Alderman Leonard; motion was approved unanimously.

Manager report

Town Manager Derian provided the following report:

Phase 5

ST Wooten continues with the Phase 5 project. They paused operations for the holidays on Dec 22nd and resumed today January 4th. Approximately 55,869 CY's have been placed as of end of day on December 21st. The contractor's holiday schedule and progress were posted and updated on the projects page.

Channel to Jacksonville

This is a USACE project. Their contractor mobilized as scheduled and currently on schedule to start on or before January 6th. They expect to work through January 20th. The contractor finished laying the pipeline and are prepping to start dredging as of yesterday.

Discussion:

- She received an email from St. Regis with questions about placement of the pipeline. It was placed as far south as possible with the goal to get the sand down towards St. Regis to have it flow back, is that correct? (McDermon)

Manager Derian replied that is correct they are pumping towards St. Regis.

- They normally start at the north limit and start pumping and add pipe as they go. Is that what they are doing now? Are they pumping north to south or south to north? (Leonard)

Manager Derian said there has been no change from how they have done it in the past. This is the Army Corps project. We met on site to discuss where the pipe would go. Because of the back and forth discussions the Army Corps decided they were going to place the pipe off in the water to avoid private property and disruptions. They are pumping now towards St. Regis. As there is another project coming, the idea was to have the Army Corps do its project first so we could see how much sand and where it was placed and then we can come in with the FEMA project afterwards and fill in to get the most benefit.

- How far south is the pipe? Will it end at the Reef area or beyond? (Fontana)
- The pipe will start at Building One at the Reef and depending on their template they will add sections to the pipe to move it south. (Benson)
- The pipe is at 2342 New River Inlet Road. This is not a nourishment project. The Army Corps is getting rid of sand that was spoils from a dredging project. (Pletl)

Manager Derian said before the email was received by the mayor, she had reached out to the Army Corps for an update. She does not want to report anything that is not correct as it is their project. She feels it is important to relay everything as it comes directly from them.

- The person on site from Army Corps is telling people these are decisions made by the Board and it has changed and that concerns her.(McDermon)

Manager Derian said she has shared that concern about comments made in the field to the Army Corps representative.

- It is their project and we talked about where they are starting which is a lot further south than they normally start to get down to the St. Regis. To your point Mayor, with the money we have from FEMA we are basically supposed to not duplicate by putting sand down and then have it covered up but make the projects work together.(Grant)

Phase 4 / Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund Grant

Manager Derian said we received the fully executed contract from the state. She will be scheduling another meeting this month with Mr. Carter and the engineers to finalize a timeline and schedule for financing and construction.

Environmental Impact Study

The latest meeting with Mickey Suggs, of the Army Corps and our engineers along with Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem was held on December 15th to discuss the EIS. Mr. Way was continuing to review the modeling completed by CPE that is to be completed this week. Steve Dial was working to complete Chapter 4. Another meeting is scheduled for January 12th to determine if we will meet the target goal of issuing the Notice of Intent by end of January.

Vitex

Manager Derian said she met with the Town Managers from Surf City and Topsail Beach to discuss vitex eradication. We are in agreement to propose an island wide project, potentially make a joint application to the state for CSDM funding in the next cycle, and have a contractor provide a turnkey project. She along with the other two towns have been in contact with Coastal Transplants on timing. This would be a project proposed for October. In 2022, Steve Mercer did a quick survey and identified 26 sites with Vitex on North Topsail Beach. We are currently discussing a memorandum of understanding to confirm/outline responsibilities for the three towns and for each respective Board to review and consider for approval. Vitex is an invasive low growing shoreline shrub that is known to cause extensive and long-term damage to dunes in NC. This plant is known to spread rapidly and choke out other vegetation with weak shallow rooting that produces dense mats spreading more than 10 yards. She proposes that we should have an Ordinance in place prior to any actions. She has reached out to Oak Island and Emerald Isle to review what they adopted for reference in preparation of a draft for review.

Discussion:

- This will not be a one- time project, correct, since it is so invasive.(Grant)

Manager Derian replied it will need to be on-going effort.

- It also impedes sea turtle nesting and hatching. (Pletl)

Finance:

Manager Derian said the auditor has reported that the last Fiscal Year (FY) audit has been completed. I am pleased to report that there are no audit findings and our fund balance increased. We increased 9.17% over last year. Several aspects of our financial operations positively influenced the total unrestricted governmental net position; Continued diligence in the collection of property taxes (maintained a tax collection % of 99.31%, increase in grant revenues and property taxes). Having no findings and our increase in fund balance will certainly help our standing with the Local Government Commission (LGC) going forward. The auditor will be here to present the full report and to answer questions. Ms. Elliott, Finance Director will be providing a report of budget vs actuals later in today's meeting under new business.

Fire Station Replacement:

Manager Derian reported that meetings have continued between the architect, Fire Chief and herself to finalize the drawings to prepare for bidding. Plans have been submitted to our Planning Director in preparation for the upcoming Planning Board meeting on January 12th. We anticipate that we will be ready to bid the project in March.

Discussion:

- Who is presenting the plan at the February meeting? (McDermon)
- Manager Derian said she reached out to Becker Morgan to attend. Planning Director Hill will be at the meeting.
- Has it been decided what to do in the interim. (Fontana)

Manager Derian replied that we have looked at several sites to contain a temporary station in the meantime. The Fire Chief has been getting estimates for trailers. She recommends Rodney Knowles as the site if we are not able to purchase property. Some infrastructure will need to be put there and that will set us up for future growth.

Parking Lot Signage:

The parking lot signage replacement project has been completed by the vendor.

Announcements

Grinding of the Greens – she has coordinated with a contractor to grind natural, ornament free Christmas trees after Christmas. Residents can drop off their undecorated trees to the designated area at Public Works through January 11th. Grinding of the Greens will take place on January 12th and free mulch will be available after January 12th on a first come first served basis.

She attended the 2nd annual Shrimp Dip at BA #30 held by the Rotary Satellite Club of Sneads Ferry on New Year's Day and posted pictures of the event. Thank you to the Fire Department staff in attendance and the organizers of the event.

The Sledgehammer Beach Run will take place once again on North Topsail Beach this year on Saturday February 4th at 8am at 2950 Island Dr. There is still time to register for half marathon, 5k or 10k. She would like to say congratulations to the Jacksonville Onslow Sports Commission who received a platinum award at the North Carolina Travel Industry Association's Annual Banquet for their Sledgehammer Beach Run held on NTB last year.

Open forum – none

Public presentations

A. Topsail Pump Station

Mr. Howard, Chief Operating Office, Onslow County Water and Sewer Authority (ONWASA) stated:

- We have a great working relationship with the manager and the Police Chief on this project. We did some soil testing last October
- After the storm season, Public Works helped to uncover some meters to assist us with moving forward with the project
- The pump station project has been in the works for a while and is due to water pressure issues

Mr. Mohr, Chief Operations Officer for ONWASA stated:

- Due to customer concerns about pressure during high demands we evaluated different alternatives and decided a booster pumping station was the best fix
- It will automatically operate during periods of high demand and help to reduce sustained decreases in system pressure
- After consideration of locations on or off the island, we determined a site adjacent to Town Hall was best. The area is adjacent to the primary water mains feeding the island, and the north and south secondary mains running up and down the island. It provides easy access and avoids potential wetland impacts
- ONWASA is responsible for all costs to construct and operate
- It is a two pump system and will be monitored twenty-four hours a day from our control center in Jacksonville
- It is meant to come on when pressure starts to drop
- DK Dixon company out of Wilmington prepared the drawing
- Temporary and permanent easements are necessary for construction
- We instructed the engineer to design and use a very similar color scheme and materials to Town Hall
- Thirty percent of the design is done and we are here today to determine if the site is acceptable to the Town and whether we can move forward with necessary easements. If so, we can move forward with completing the design and bidding the project
- The goal is to have it completed no later than the 2024 summer season. There are challenges with material purchases and permitting
- We made operational changes this last summer to help pressure problems on the island including how we use the water tank at Snead's Ferry and purchasing supplemental water. We do monitor the pressure here all summer long with devices on some hydrants.

Discussion:

- Thank you, Mr. Mohr, for all the work. She said we are still having issues with some large beach homes getting water pressure up to all three floors. Is there any recommendation or demand from ONWASA when service is set up for these homes to install a booster pump? (McDermon)

Mr. Mohr replied that we do that now and we get questions about booster pumps. It is not mandated. Most customers believe it is our problem, not theirs. Our goal is to be as close to 60 psi as we can.

- The rendering has a fair amount of open space. Is that for temperature control? Do you ever allow other equipment to be in your buildings, such as cell phone tower equipment? We have such bad cell service on the island. (Grant)

Mr. Mohr said they would need more detail to make that decision.

- We are sixty-eight percent built out for structures on parcels. Sixty-five new building permits have been issued and construction is yet to be completed. Are you looking at capacity needs for the future? What will the noise volume be? The plan looks like there will be a horizontal drill. Will there be any loss to use of the parking lot? (Benson)

Mr. Mohr said we will have additional capacity to help with future needs. We are looking at a larger pump. The pump is inside the building with no windows which is as bunker like as possible. Noise will be limited. The drilling will be set up next to the building and the road and will not be cut into or access the driveway.

Consensus- the manager is to continue to work with ONWASA on easements to move forward with this project.

Mr. Howard said there are two connections to the water from ONWASA's system. We are going to put meter vaults in so we can monitor and understand there are further issues.

- Will the booster pump will help them at the far north end with the water pressure issues. (Leonard)

Mr. Howard replied yes.

- If the water got cut off and we cannot get it is there a way to be connected to water from Surf City? (Fontana)

Mr. Howard said we are connected to Surf City now. It is a small connection and he is not sure how adequate that would be for the north end but there is an emergency connection with Surf City.

Coastal Engineer Monthly Report

Mr. Fran Way, Coastal Engineer, stated:

- Phase One is near the New River Inlet and Phases Two through Five are down to the Surf City Town limit. Different phases are based on difference in shoreline and CBRA regulations.
- Army Corps dredging project is status quo. The dredging firm Cottrell is good and is placing 15,000 cubic yards of material for Category G FEMA mitigation for Hurricane Dorian. There is permitting for placement of more sand if needed. It will work north to south. We can do about 10,000 cubic yards a day which is about 17.3 days if everything goes as it should. With mobilization before and demobilization after the project, the whole project should take about six weeks.

- Topsail Reef area is one nourishment project that is permitted. It will be truck haul material and will be on the beach at the dune. As soon as the Army Corps finishes its project, we will come in and survey to update our plans and resubmit to the CAMA folks. This usually takes a couple of weeks. 15,000 cubic yards is what FEMA mitigated.
- Phase Five is going well but a little slower. They are placing 205,000 cubic yards daily. Truck hauls are always slower than dredging operations. They are making good progress.
- Phase Four will start where Phase Five stops and will continue north to where the Town Hall is. Permitting is ongoing. There will be placement of 465,000 cubic yards over two and a half miles of shoreline.
- We had to resubmit post Hurricane Ian survey data for the county beach access dune rehabilitation project. DCM has said they are good with the data. We have an updated cost and we are good from a permitting point of view and are in a position to start this project this month.

Discussion:

- She noticed this past week significant erosion in front of Dolphin Shores north of St. Regis. She wants to be sure we can get as much sand as possible as far south as we can for that area. (McDermon)
- The Army Corps project is sugar sand going on the beach. The Phase One Hurricane Dorian project is also on the beach, not the dunes. We are going to get two different types of sand for each of these projects, correct? (Grant)

Mr. Way responded that is correct.

- How will the two different sands react? The sand from the Army Corps project is different granularity sand. Then you put on top of that beach granularity sand. What happens when you do that? (Leonard)

Mr. Way replied that both sands are beach compatible. Sugar sand is finer, but it is still within the beach compatible range. The trucked in sand is courser but still very beach compatible. It will usually mix. The channel dredging sand is 0.2 millimeters and the truck haul is 0.4 millimeters. Native sediment grain size is .25 millimeters. Both the sands getting placed is within the natural range and they will mix a little bit. The courser sand will mix in and help the sugar sand stay there longer.

- Have you accounted for the sand that formed a dune during one of the storms? (Grant)

Mr. Way stated some material moved post Hurricane Ian. The volume came down, so the cost estimate from the truck hauler is less.

- We are only seeing part of the Army project (170,000 cubic yards) coming to North Topsail Beach. As the project gets further upriver towards Jacksonville, that sand is too fine to be compatible on the beach and so 30,000 cubic yards is going to be disposed of on Bird Island. If you are a boater and drive up to Jacksonville you will notice those sand flats off either side of the channel, so that is where the sand that is not compatible will go. He does not think we should be worrying so much about the 170,000 cubic yards of sand coming here to our beaches because the Army Corps is regulating the fact that it is at least within the grain size that will do some good in the environment of the sand onshore

and offshore. He did not realize we already had a contract for the truck haul project, is that correct? So the project could start next week? (Benson)

Mr. Way explained there will have to be an amendment to the existing contract.

- Mr. Way has been communicating with the contractor CM Mitchell. We have the updated numbers already. (Derian)
- As far as he knows, we have not nourished the beach for ten or even twenty years for the state grant project. Is there more environmental work that has to be done by the Army Corps and CAMA than normally would be done than for an area that has been renourished. (Benson)

Mr. Way said possibly, but the 2009 Environmental Impact Study covered the entire shoreline. We are not starting with a blank slate.

- Is there any reason why the analysis of the four-year simulation of the EIS that you are working on now will hold us up from getting on the Army Corps to issue a Notice of Intent? Will you have enough data analysis to satisfy the Army Corps next week? (Benson)

Mr. Way said the modeling that has been done that shows a terminal groin will work. The New River Inlet channel has a major influence on the New River Inlet and the modelling shows the terminal groin is a much smaller element to the project than the dredging.

Consent Agenda

Motion – Mayor Pro Tem Benson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Alderman Leonard; motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda items:

- Onslow County Notice of MOTV Tax Refund
- Approval of Minutes December 7, 2022, Regular Meeting
- Approval of Minutes December 16, 2022, Work session
- Draft December 7, 2022, regular minutes
- Draft December 16, 2022, work session minutes

Continuing Business

A. BISAC guidelines and objects

Alderman Grant referenced the discussion at the December BOA meeting regarding the BISAC guidelines issues (such as super majority and that no other town committee has guidelines) and that the guidelines be directed to the town attorney for review and recommendations but that those issues had not been resolved by the town attorney. He suggests that we direct BISAC committee to review the current beach plan and work with the beach engineer to determine issues that need to be addressed. There are no guidelines or charters for other committees. It needs to be simplified that the Board of Aldermen authorizes committees.

Discussion:

- At the BISAC meeting later this month, goals will be developed by BISAC and brought to this Board in February. (Benson)

- The issue is with chain of command. Who sets the tone and tasks for BISAC. Is it the Board of Aldermen (BOA) or BISAC telling BOA what they will do. He thinks it should be BOA telling BISAC. (Leonard) The consensus is that the BOA provides direction not the BISAC committee.
- He agrees that BISAC needs direction. If not, then just disband the committee. (Benson)
- It was agreed that BISAC is not to come up with new goals but instead identify what needs to be done in response to the goal identified by Alderman Grant (Mayor)

New Business

A. Budget versus current and forecast

Finance Officer Caitlin stated:

- This is a review of the financial status and outlook for the remaining fiscal year
- There are three Funds:
 - Fund 10 is the General Fund
 - Fund 12 is the Capital Improvement Fund
 - Fund 30 is the Shoreline Protection Fund
- Year to Date (July 1 through December 22) the biggest revenues are property taxes, occupancy taxes, parking revenues and sales and use taxes
- Fund 10 is a \$7 million budget. We have received \$5 million in revenue and expended just shy of \$3 million dollars. We have spent 42% of the budget. Last year at this time, we had spent 50% . We do have some expenditures that have not been spent yet such as some demolition costs, Fire Department renovations, park renovations and concerts. She expects a surplus in Fund 10 at the end of the fiscal year.
- Fund 12 has a budget of \$1.1 million. We have received \$930,000 in revenue (all property tax) and expended \$136,000. The majority of expenditures is for the architect Becker Morgan fees for the new fire station. This is a new Fund, so there is no comparison to last year
- Fund 30 has a budget of \$4.2 million. \$3.6 million in revenue has been received and we have expended \$2.3 million. 56% of the budget has been spent. The majority covers the first payment on the USDA loan we restructured. Last year at this point, we had spent 2% of the budget.
- Main revenue year to date is Ad valorem tax revenue. Budget is \$6,084,027 and we have collected \$5,032,947 which leaves over a million dollars left to collect. We are still receiving monies from Onslow County for property taxes.
- Occupancy tax budget is \$1.5 and we have collected \$1.8 million. This is very encouraging. Last year at this same time frame, we received \$1.4 million. We are at 121% revenue collected.
- Parking revenue budget is \$730,000 and we have collected 311,000. We have \$400,00 remaining revenue to collect. It was predicted that it might decrease after the initial roll out of paid parking. Last year we had \$266,000 collected. Annual permit sales begin next month, so she expects to see increase. We also have high traffic months coming in which bring more revenue so she thinks it will come in lower.

- Sales and Use taxes has a budget of \$2.5 million. We have collected \$1.7 million and have \$813,000 left to collect. We have collected 68% and she expects to exceed that. Last year we received \$1.3 million dollars and we projected a 10% increase and we are seeing that come to fruition.
- We have not had to dip into our contingency fund which is another reason why she expects to have a surplus in Fund 10 at the end of the fiscal year. The inflation percentage has decreased as of November 2022 with June 2022 being the highest.
- In December, Federal Reserve raised its basis points by 50 points. This benefits the Town for our reinvested dividends in our trust account. There is currently \$12 million dollars in that account. Last fiscal year we received just over \$16,000 dollars. Last month we received over \$34,000, so it is a significant increase for us.
- In the past, requests have been made for month to month reports instead of year to date. The system does not currently provide month to month and we have requested the ability to compare month to month from the vendor. She can create it but has not had the time to do.

Discussion:

- Since we have spent less this year in Fund 10 than last year, is that because of a lag in expenses? (Fontana)

Finance Officer Elliott responded that routine costs such as salaries, insurance, etc. are paid about the same time of the year but there are still some expenses to be paid. For the most part, it applies to apples with everything that has been paid as to what we paid for last year.

- How much of a lag time there is in getting tax money from Onslow County. (Grant)

Finance Officer Elliott said there is a thirty-day lag time. We budgeted conservatively because of uncollectible taxes and a revaluation. Our collection rate is 99%. We have collected 83% of projected revenue so far.

- Does the shortfall have to do with tickets not being paid? (McDermon)

Manager Derian stated that ticket collection funds are not rolled into these funds. She can check on how collections are going.

- The vendor downsized what he thought we could get from parking when he first presented the plan. We have also had some bad weather over peak holidays. (Grant)
- The first year was in the middle of the pandemic and it was easier to buy passes and now that has leveled out. (Pletl)
- When we rolled this out, the County had not gotten all of its free lots upgraded and people are not traveling. (Leonard)

- If they do not pay the ticket, are there any repercussions with DMV? (Fontana)

Manager Derian said when this was rolled out, there was nothing put in place for collections. We discussed options and decided to enter into an agreement with a collection agency to collect.

- When they met with the County, there was talk about a relationship between how much we get in sales and use taxes and that could be increased somehow. (Grant)

Finance Officer Elliott said there are two options the state provides: ad valorem or population. Ad valorem is better financially for us even with revaluation.

- He thought there was special legislation that allowed Onslow County to have a blend of the two. (Leonard)

Attorney Edes said that did happen and each year they can elect one of three options.

- My compliments to Finance Officer Elliott on getting a clean audit report especially with such a small staff. He believes she said expenses this year will be a little bit less than budgeted and revenues will be a little bit more than budgeted. Is that a fair assessment? (Grant)

Finance Officer Elliott said that is correct.

- What usually gets small towns is the delegation of responsibilities and it sounds like you have that worked out. (Fontana)

B. Board of Aldermen Goals

Mayor McDermon stated some committees have provided their goals, so we should run through them now. That would be Legislative and CIP goals.

1. Legislative Committee 2023 goals

Alderman Leonard said he wrote them up and submitted them to the mayor for review who is in concurrence with them. They are straightforward and simple. He reviewed the list of draft goals as follows:

Federal (CBRA)

-Work simultaneously through our Washington lobbyist and our contacts in Congressman Murphy's office to reintroduce CBRA bills in both congressional chambers during this session.

State

a. House

-Set up meeting, via Connie Wilson, with our new State Representative, Carson Smith.
-Consider an introduction from Phil Shepard. We need to establish a dialogue with Representative Smith and begin forming a relationship, and I think Phil could really assist here.

Topics:

-Brief Representative Smith on the town's issues and challenges with the New River Inlet, with the goal of receiving a pledge of his support. Discuss the hardened structure/terminal groin, and how a permanent solution that would stabilize the inlet would benefit not just the town, but the commercial and recreational fishing industries, the military, etc. Use the recent Ocean Isle Beach project as an example.

- Funding and timeline for adding shoulders to SR-1568 (New River Inlet Rd)
- State assistance with beach nourishment/improvement/shoreline protection, primarily in Phases 2 & 3, as they have received no attention.
- Other relevant topics, as suggested by Connie Wilson, our lobbyist

b. Senate

- Continue dialogue with State Senator Lazzara in order to accomplish:

1. Reintroduction of language to repeal Section 4, Senate Bill 110 of 2011, which reads, *“No State funds may be spent for any activities related to a terminal groin and its accompanying beach fill project permitted pursuant to G.S. 113A-115.1, as amended by Section 1 of this act, unless the General Assembly enacts legislation appropriating funds explicitly for such purpose. This section shall not apply to any beach fill or beach nourishment project initiated prior to the effective date of this act.”*

2. Reintroduction of Senate Bill DRS45031-MH-4B of January 2021, entitled, *AN ACT TO CLARIFY THAT A TERMINAL GROIN IS NOT AN EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURE AND THEREFORE IS NOT SUBJECT TO LIMITATIONS ON THOSE STRUCTURES.*

Alderman Leonard said he is open to any suggestions on these draft goals.

2. Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Committee (TISPC) 2023 goals

Alderman Leonard said they received goals from the TISPC for the upcoming year. Primarily our legislative goals here are captured in the 2023 advocate goals for TISPC. There is one at the Federal level, item D to continue legislation to amend CBRA map L06 and on the State level, item C to continue state funding in local guidelines for terminal groins. TISPC goals include what we are trying to do at the town level and he thinks they match up fairly well.

Discussion:

- He has not had time to look at the goals and he would like to have time to review them. (Grant)
- The process TISPC takes several months to develop goals. The problem is timing. We have to work in contract agreement with lobbyists at the beginning of the year. That is why Chairman Smith asked the Board to look over the goals so they can move forward with direction to do contracts with the lobbyists. If we cannot agree today, then can we do it by consensus so the Chairman can move forward? (Benson)
- She wants to reword planning retreat into maybe more regular monthly work sessions rather than one session, so that things are not waiting until the next meeting. She thinks it is not fair to give something to Board the night before and ask them to approve it the next day. She thinks we can give Mr. Smith our feedback by the end of the next week. She thinks there are things that came up today that will require a planning meeting before February meeting such as updates on the Phase Four contracting, remaining goals for BISAC and Parks and Recreation, the location of the temporary fire station, demolition expenses, and ongoing financial questions. (McDermon)

- She thought these items would be addressed at the meeting the Board would schedule today. (Derian)
- She still wants to set a date but call it a work session and not a planning retreat. She wants to figure out if it is best to have a regular work session instead. (McDermon)
- Surf City has work sessions all the time, so this is not an unusual procedure to follow to handle things that come up in the short term. (Benson)
- He thinks Mayor Pro Tem Benson has the consensus of the Board on the TISPC goals. We also need to know when this information is ready to be able to set a date. (Grant)

C. Planning retreat date and details

Consensus – hold work session on Friday the 13th from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm to discuss remaining goals, BISAC guidelines, the location of the temporary fire station.

Public Forum

1. We have been encouraging people to come to the meetings. He has been coming to the meetings a long time and he thinks the Board should tell people what the items are that you talk about such as EIS. He knows what it is but he is sure other folks may not know.
2. Susan Myer, 2224 New River Inlet Road, Topsail Reef, said she thinks there is still confusion about where they are going to pump sand. For example, the comment that they are pumping and expect to go back to put sand at St. Regis. It sounded like the pipe might be moved for more pumping rather than you expect the sand to flow back toward that area.

Attorney's Report

None

Mayor's Report

Mayor McDermon said she is glad to hear from so many folks. She appreciates everything that the staff has done through the holidays and all year long.

Aldermen report

Alderman Grant thanked everyone for coming and said 2023 should be a good year for the beach.

Alderman Fontana said he is glad folks come to the meetings. If you do not come, we do not know what is on your mind.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson stated he and Alderman Leonard initiated a comment letter from the Town to US Fish and Wildlife. They do a five-year review of the CBRA maps. Congressman Murphy made a comment back in November on our behalf that the maps should not include areas of the CBRA zone that have infrastructure which has been a long-standing argument. The Town developed a comment to submit to Fish and Wildlife to support Congressman Murphy's

comment to Fish and Wildlife and he thanked the Board members along with advocate and former Congressman McIntyre for providing editing and comments to our comments. He thinks it turned out well. He gave a shout out to the Public Works Department for the excellent job of cleaning up all debris on the north end that blew up on the sandbags from further south on the island before the storm on the weekend. There is a great article about the Mayor in Topsail magazine. He thanked the staff for their excellent performance.

Alderman Leonard said he will be calling the contact at Congressman Murphy's office to see what our way ahead is to get a bill for this session and determine what our strategy is going forward. He assumes the Board will need to pass some sort of resolution requesting they move a bill forward. He thanked the interim clerk for a great job, specifically on the minutes from the work session that covered the meeting thoroughly without a lot of words and was easy to follow. Alderman Pletl thanked all who came out today and watched via the internet. She thanked the administrative and finance staff for all their work and the whole staff, Fire and Police, that helped with the shrimp dip. She received a lot of good feedback about the event. She said she is looking forward to working with the Board on goals to move the Town forward in a positive direction that benefits everyone.

Closed session

Motion – Alderman Leonard motioned to go into a closed session at 12:53 pm as per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to preserve attorney client privilege; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Benson; motion passed unanimously

Open session

Motion – Alderman Leonard motioned to return to open session at 1:23 pm; seconded by Alderman Pletl; motion passed unanimously.

Mayor McDermon said no action was taken in closed session.

Adjournment

Motion Alderman Pletl motioned to adjourn at 1:24 pm; seconded by Alderman Fontana; motion passed unanimously.

Joann McDermon, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Nancy Avery, Interim Town Clerk