

Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
DRAFT MINUTES

The Town of North Topsail Beach Board of Aldermen held its regular meeting on March 5, 2025. A quorum of the board was present. Town Manager Derian and Attorney Payson were in attendance.

Board members present: Mayor Joann McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem Tom Leonard
Aldermen: Richard Grant, Mike Benson, Connie Pletl and Laura Olszewski

Board members absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDermon called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard gave the invocation. Mayor McDermon led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor McDermon asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

Motion – Alderman Grant motioned to remove item D. ‘GWI Tax & Accounting Amendment to GWI Tax and Accounting Engagement Agreement’ from the Consent Agenda to Continuing Business and adopt the agenda as amended; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Leonard; unanimously approved.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Manager Derian provided the following report to the Board.

Beach Projects and Operations

The Army Corps of Engineers project is continuing. The navigation branch is continuing to conduct the dredging of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and channels to Jacksonville and place beach compatible material along the Phase 1 shoreline. This started on January 28th. They reported that before the dredge survey came in at 77,500 cubic yards out of a possible 88,000 cubic yards bid quantity. South wind Dredge has had some equipment issues that they reported and I kept in communication with the Army Corps during throughout this project and touched base with them yesterday for the latest update. The dredge has more work to do to clear the channels, so they expect an additional 2-3 additional days of work at this point in time.

The Phase 4 project

The change orders that were approved at the February Board of Aldermen meeting were executed with the contractor who has continued to haul sand along the Phase 4 shoreline. As of March 3rd, they have placed 118,003 cubic yards throughout Phase 4 project. This started in the vicinity of 3686 Island Drive and has continued to work north. They have been accessing the beach through the Second Avenue access which is beach access number 28 at 518 Topsail Road.

The contractor is planning on March 10th to move from using this access to the Jeffries access which is located here on New River Inlet Road just behind Town Hall. They will cordon off the area where they are working from during the week. Parking will still be available while work is ongoing and everything will be fully open and remain open on the weekends. They will be using this access for the duration of the project. Again, this is not a dune project but a project that places sand on the active beach area. They will continue to haul this season to the extent they have dredged sand available. Any balance in the contract quantity will be hauled and placed up the fall of 2025. The potential for the proposed PTC # 8 work can affect progress with completing Phase 4 sand and contractor availability will likely be an issue.

Potential Cyclone # 8 dune project – the unnamed storm

Weekly meetings with FEMA have continued and will continue as required. The site meeting has been completed for the Marina Way crossover project. I have submitted everything into their portal so it can continue to go through FEMA's process. The project will be reviewed by multiple levels of FEMA. It is currently being reviewed by the Consolidated Resources Team. The next step in the review process is the EHP, which is their Environmental Team. Following last week's meeting I asked staff to proceed with the contractor to start the permitting process so that it can start repairs. The proposed dune project which is a separate FEMA project revolving around PTC # 8 has continued to move through the process with FEMA as well while we have been working simultaneously working to prepare bid documents, issue an invitation for bids and holding the scheduled bid opening on March 3rd. One contractor was in attendance to submit a bid. Per NCGS 143-132 requires a minimum of three bids to open bids for formal contracts further outlined in NCGS 143-129. If fewer than three bids are received, then you have to advertise for a full seven-day period. After the second advertisement, if fewer than three bids are received a contract may be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Under federal regulation 2 CFR 200.320 requires bids to be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources to ensure full and open competition. I touched base with FEMA and every entity that we are involved with this, and it was determined that extending the bid for a full seven days with another bid opening on March 14th was determined to be the best way to move forward. That publication has been published this week. Proposals are due March 14th at Town Hall at 2 pm. I polled the Board of Aldermen to solidify a date to hold a special meeting for March 19th at 11 am. This is on your agenda today and we will still talk about today and move forward with approving budget amendments for this project. FEMA has not officially obligated any funds for PTC # 8 work up until this date. It has been conveyed to me from the Board to prepare with moving forward to complete the project. Due to funds not being obligated by FEMA yet and the desire to move forward with the project based on current conditions in Phases 1 – 3, the appropriate have been made as outlined in the finance report.

Villa Capriana crosswalk

The pedestrian crossing lights at the existing crosswalk at 790 New River Inlet Road have been installed. The only remaining piece of this project is to re-stripe the crosswalk. This was not completed at the time of the crossing lights due to ambient temperatures required for installation of the thermo-plastic pavement on the asphalt. This work will be scheduled soon.

Fiscal year 2025-2026 budget

The budget calendar has been prepared and provided to the Board of Aldermen with scheduled meetings with Department Heads throughout March 6-7. Budget workshops with the Board of Aldermen are scheduled with the Board of Aldermen for April 10th and 14th which will be public meetings from 9 am to 4:30 pm. Each department will present its budget requests to the Board. The Board will review a draft budget document, and a discussion of prioritization of needs versus available funds will take place and we intend to solicit innovative ideas or services and there will be a review of Capital Improvement items. April 15-16 will also be a public workshop from 9 am to 4: 30 pm at Town Hall to review updated draft budgeted documents at that time. May 7th at the regular Board of Aldermen meeting there will be a Public Hearing on the budget. Per statute, the Board must hold at least one Public Hearing on the budget. June 4th, at the regular Board of Aldermen meeting, the budget will be considered and adopted. For the workshops, two days have been scheduled to allow adequate time for discussion. We can also schedule more if necessary. If workshop tasks are completed the first meeting, then no subsequent meetings will be required.

OPEN FORUM

- Ed Quigley, 5125 Cottage Street, Richmond, Virginia spoke on behalf of safety issues and concerns with umbrellas on the beach, wind forces and development of safety standards for securing umbrellas.
- Ray Chapman, 13 Osprey Drive, said they will follow up with DOT at the state level on the request for a reduction in speed limit on New River Inlet Road, as there has been no action by the Board of Aldermen and no communication about it. 42 registered voters signed the petition for the reduction.
- Cameron Krugel, 3902 River Road, said he likes driving 45 mph and does not think they should have to ban together to change the speed limit that has always been the same. He stated he does not think Joann (McDermon) lives in North Topsail because her house is for sale, and he plans to run for mayor. He still has not received relief from the flooding on the road at River Road and River Drive even though he has made suggestions on how to fix it and on other things and never hears a response from the Town. It concerns him that the Town might agree to maintain a sidewalk a resident wants to build when it will not maintain a ditch on town land across from his house that takes all the flood water that drains to that point. He has done a lot of things for the Town but never received a certificate of appreciation. Communication with the Town volunteers is terrible. He also wants to know what is happening with the \$650,000 set aside for the sand revetment committee.
- Jonathan Edwards, 547 New River Inlet Road, said he is requesting to put in a pathway so that he can walk to the park and beach access and the 45-mph speed limit is too fast and unsafe.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AND HEARINGS

A. Certificates of Appreciation

Mayor McDermon asked Deborah Coltrane, Stu Harness, Scott Morse, and Steve Scheibner to come forward to receive Certificates of Appreciation. None were in attendance.

B. Coastal Engineer Monthly Report

Engineer Way presented the monthly report with the following highlights:

- The Phase 1 Corps Intracoastal Waterway project to place 88,000 cubic yards of material is being finished.
- The final sections of the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the New River Inlet Management Plan are under development.
- The State grant nourishment project to place 250,000 cubic yards of material in Phase 4 has begun and is going well with about 70,000 cubic yards being placed a month.
- Bid invitations have been issued for the post tropical cyclone # 8 project.
- Investigations are on-going for the on the disposal area 143 beneficial reuse for nourishment of Phases 1, 2 and 3.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items include:

- Board of Aldermen February 5, 2025, minutes
- Budget amendment 2025-25.17 Fund 10 General Fund GWI Tax & Accounting Contract Amendment
- Budget amendment 2025-25.18 Staffing Consulting Solutions
- Budget amendments 2025-25.19 and 20 to make funds available to proceed with the PTC # 8 project as outlined
- Approved Retainer Agreement for Faleris Law Firm – Conflict Council for Board of Adjustment
- Approved MGT Impact Solutions, LLC Master Service Agreement

Motion – Mayor Pro Tem Leonard motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda as modified during the adoption of the agenda; seconded by Alderman Benson; unanimously approved.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. GWI Tax & Accounting Amendment to GWI Tax and Accounting Engagement Agreement

Attorney Payson reviewed the changes to the amendment as follows:

1. Section 1 under amendment to Exhibit A – language was added at the end where it says ‘amended by adding the following enumerated services’ with new language to say ‘in the order of the Town’s priority of completion’ which prioritizes items A - L
2. Number 4 on page 2 added new language ‘continues after deems relevant in the completion of said work as well as statements of progress to high priority tasks’ which instructs GWI to provide progress reports
3. A new # 6 is added to state ‘GWI agrees that GWI will not bill the Town in excess of eight hours per day per individual without prior written approval from the Town Manager’
4. A minor change at the bottom in the pre-audit language

Motion - Alderman Grant motioned to approve the GWI Tax & Accounting Amendment to GWI Tax and Accounting Engagement Agreement as presented; seconded by Alderman Olszewski; unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Bid results - Invitation for bids – North Topsail Beach Northern Shoreline Dune Truck Haul Project (PTC # 8) Budget Amendments 2025-25.19 and 2025.25.20

Mayor McDermon explained the Board will not address the bid results today as re-bidding is necessary and requested a motion to approve the associated budget amendments.

Motion – Alderman Grant motioned to adopt Budget Amendments 2025-25.19 and 2025.25.20 for the North Topsail Beach Northern Shoreline Dune Truck Haul Project (PTC # 8) as presented; seconded by Alderman Olszewski; unanimously approved.

B. Request from Mr. Edmonds to construct a 4 foot pathway from 547 New River Inlet Road to Richard Peters Park within the NCDOT right of way

Manager Derian explained Mr. Edmonds made this request right before the last Board meeting. She confirmed with NCDOT that should the Board want to move forward with this, the form Mr. Edmonds included is the correct form. She contacted WK Dickson, the engineer working on stormwater improvement projects at Gray Street and near Richard Peters Park to ensure moving forward with this would not conflict with those plans which it will not and they do not anticipate any maintenance issues within the next 10 years outside of regular maintenance on that type of pathway.

Attorney Payson expressed concern that the form was blank and advised the Board to ask Mr. Edmonds to talk with NCDOT and fill in the form, particularly the section on construction and erection of the pathway and clarify what he is proposing be done then bring it back to the Board to have something concrete to consider.

Mr. Edmonds stated he is not asking them to approve a blank form but wants the Board's verbal, on the record approval, that once he puts the money in and does the work that the Town will take ownership of it. He does not want to outlay thousands of dollars starting this and then be out \$20,000. He is saving the Town \$20,000 instead of making an ADA complaint. He urged the Town to give him a verbal yes to move forward so he does not have to escalate this.

Mayor McDermon asked for a consensus from the Board for Mr. Edmonds to fill out the NCDOT form and bring it back to the Board of Aldermen for consideration or the Planning Board.

Alderman Pletl – Board of Aldermen
Alderman Benson – Planning Director, if not the Planning Board
Mayor Pro Tem Leonard – Board of Aldermen
Alderman Olszewski – Board of Aldermen
Alderman Grant – Board of Aldermen

Consensus – Mr. Edmonds to bring back concrete plans on the NCDOT form to the Board of Aldermen for consideration.

C. 2025 Washington, DC federal meetings week of April 2028
Mayor McDermon asked for a consensus for Mayor Pro Tem Leonard and Manager Derian as the representatives to attend the federal meetings.

Consensus - Mayor Pro Tem Leonard and Manager Derian to attend the federal meetings in Washington, DC.

OPEN FORUM - None

ATTORNEY REPORT – no report.

MAYOR REPORT – Mayor McDermon thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

ALDERMEN REPORTS:

Alderman Pletl thanked the manager and staff saying she was particularly happy with the crosswalk signs at Villa Capriani that seem to be working very well.

Alderman Benson thanked everyone for being in attendance and showing an interest in the Town’s activities.

Mayor Pro Tem Leonard said the trip to Washington will primarily be about the Town being divested of the Coastal Barriers Resources Act. The bill is prepared and ready to be filed. It is co-sponsored by Congressmen Murphy and Rouzer. When it is filed there will be a link on the Town’s website to track its progress.

Alderman Olszewski thanked those for participating in the meeting and knows it takes time from their day. She stated there are jobs posted on the Town’s website, and we need people to share that with anyone they know that might be looking for a position with the Town. Project information and status are also listed on the Town’s website. She encouraged everyone to attend the strategic planning meetings conducted by Onslow County on growth in the area.

Alderman Grant cautioned everyone about the burning ban. The ONWASA pump station here at Town Hall has been started. He would like to have the Onslow County Planning Director to visit and talk about planning in the area.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion – Alderman Olszewski motioned to go into Closed Session as per NCGS 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with the attorney; seconded by Alderman Benson; unanimously approved.

Motion – Alderman Olszewski motioned to return to open session; seconded by Alderman Leonard; unanimously approved.

Mayor McDermon stated no action was taken in Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion – Mayor Pro Tem Leonard motioned to adjourn; seconded by Alderman Benson; unanimously approved.

Joann McDermon, Mayor