

**Board of Aldermen
September 3, 2025
Draft Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDermon called the meeting to order at 11:00AM.

II. INVOCATION

Alderman Grant gave the invocation.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Alderman Benson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Alderman Benson and Mayor Pro Tem Leonard requested to remove items A – D from IX Continuing Business. Alderman Olszewski was open to removing item D, but also wished to add an additional item. Alderman Benson vocalized his disapproval of adding items to the agenda that were not originally advertised when the agenda was first published.

Motion— Alderman Benson made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of the items A – D under IX. Continuing Business. Alderman Olszewski requested to keep items A – C. remove D and add an additional item regarding hurricanes. Alderman Benson vocalized his desire to be able to review documents prior to the meeting. Alderman Grant vocalized his support for having the items on the agenda for open dialogue. Mayor McDermon pointed out that the Manager's report does address some of the items being discussed. Alderman Pletl asked that documents on the agenda for discussion should come with a document summarize the point of discussion for the sake of citizens. The motion carried in a 3-2 vote with Alderman Benson, Alderman Pletl, and Mayor Pro Tem Leonard voting in favor of the motion and Alderman Grant and Alderman Olszewski voting in opposition of the motion.

Motion— Alderman Olszewski made a motion to add Hurricane Preparedness. Alderman Grant seconded the motion. Alderman Pletl questioned if it was hypocritical to add the item without any summarizing documentation. Alderman Grant advocated for open discussion. The motion failed with Alderman Grant and Alderman Olszewski voting in favor of the motion and Alderman Benson, Alderman Pletl, and Mayor Pro Tem Leonard voting in opposition.

V. MANAGER'S REPORT

Open Positions

Manager Derian reported at the August meeting that she expected the Planner 1 position to be filled soon, and North Topsail Beach has someone scheduled to start September 22nd. Anyone interested in the Finance Officers position or Building Administrator's position can apply through MGT and the link is on the North Topsail Beach website.

Board members asked about a Purchasing Agent being added to the staff of the Town. Questions of competitive salary and a job description were posed. Manager Derian will

report back to the Board with a job description for a purchasing agent position. The Board agreed to a budget amendment added to the next agenda to budget for the new position.

Motion— Alderman Olszewski made a motion to approve the position of an Accountant I (purchasing agent). Mayor Pro Tem Leonard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Beach Projects and Operations

Potential Tropical Cyclone #8:

Work continues to be on pause for the season effective May 2nd. The project remains at the CRC level with FEMA, and North Topsail has responded to the latest request for information last week.

Beach Access Matting

North Topsail Beach was scheduled to have the beach access matting installed at Jeffries the week that Hurricane Erin emerged. The Public Works Supervisor and Manager Derian still met during the week with the vendor to review installation. Installation has since been completed.

Hurricane Erin

The week of August 18th, a considerable amount of time was spent monitoring and responding to inquiries revolving around Hurricane Erin. Pre and Post storm conditions were documented. Topsail Dunes Building #1 area held up well where the Town recently placed sand for PTC#8 and Building 3 experienced wash through where the Town paused which was not surprising. North Topsail Beach will be picking back up in the fall and placing some sand lost from PTC #8 which should help this area. Manager Derian requested our engineers do a dashboard survey of the beach to determine if further surveys were necessary and according to their report, the overall damage would not come anywhere close to the FEMA threshold.

Manager Derian reminded the public that North Topsail Beach is still in hurricane season and now approaching what is historically the most active part of the season, Onslow County has rolled out a new emergency alert system, ReGroup that officially replaced CodeRED. This system will keep citizens informed on any public safety updates, evacuation notices, etc. She recommended citizens sign up if they have not already done so. Information is on the North Topsail Beach website, and citizens can text JOIN NTBALERTS to 31002. Also, residents that still need a re-entry pass, please apply for one today. The Town will not issue passes within 72 hours of a predicted landfall, so it is important that citizens prepare in advance.

Crosswalks

Manager Derian received two recent requests for crosswalk installations on NCDOT roadways. One on New River Inlet Road at Sea Gull Lane and One on Island Drive at Surf City Campground. The Board has budgeted \$280,000 for crosswalk construction and restriping. Estimates received at budget time were \$35k each, which would allow for 8 should the board decide to move forward with these projects. Manager Derian will need feedback from the Board on location priorities and feedback if they want to proceed with the

same type of crosswalk installed at Villa Caprianni. In previous meetings, the Board indicated that Richard Peters Park and Rogers Bay may be the next priorities. The Town would need to send NCDOT an official request and indication of support.

Mayor McDermon requested staff put together a list of where the crosswalks should be placed. County access points should be paid by the county. Alderman Benson vocalized that the Town may not need to spend money on lighting the crosswalks. Alderman Olszewski would like the Public Works Department to review and report back to the board at a meeting. Alderman Grant stated the Town needed to prioritize where the crosswalks were placed as too many may cause them to be ignored.

VI. OPEN FORUM

Mary Summers, 26 Bermuda Landing Place, spoke about the fire station being built.

Joe Summers, 26 Bermuda Landing Place, thanked the Board for their work.

VII. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AND HEARINGS

There were no public presentations or hearings.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Department Head Reports
- C. Committee Reports
- D. Budget Amendment 2026-26.13 Fund 50 ECS Southeast CO #2 and 2026-26.14 Fund 12 Transfer to Fund 50 for ECS Southeast CO #2
- E. Ratification of the CM Mitchell Settlement Agreement and Fund 31 BA 2025-26.12
- F. Audit Engagement and Contract Ratification – S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP
- G. Budget Amendments 2026-26.15 Fund 50 WB Brawley CO #8 and 2026-26.16 Fund 12 Transfer to Fund 50 for WB Brawley CO #8
- H. June 2025 NCVTS Refunds
- I. Monthly Coastal Engineer Report

Motion— Alderman Pletl made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mayor pro Tem Leonard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. CONTINUING BUSINESS

- ~~A. Accounting Contract and Services (Alderman Olszewski)~~
- ~~B. Review of Open Town Positions (Alderman Olszewski)~~
- ~~C. Review of Roof Replacement and Projects at the Public Works Facility (Alderman Olszewski)~~
- ~~D. Update on the Fire Station (Alderman Olszewski)~~
- E. Fire Report (Chief Soward)
Chief Soward reviewed the July monthly statistics for the Fire Department and answered questions from the Board. Chief Soward clarified that beach rescue is done by North Topsail Beach and ambulances are provided by Onslow County.

F. Police Report (Chief Younginer)

Chief Younginer provided a statistical overview of the July and August months for crimes in North Topsail Beach. He stated for the record the non-emergency number for the Police is (910) 455- 9119.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Debates (Counsel / Alderman Grant)

Attorney Ferguson reported the Town could host debates, but factors such as moderators, representative members, and usage of town employees should be taken into consideration. Alderman Grant proposed a third party could use the space for debates in the same manner as Topsail Chamber of Commerce was doing, as that is the Towns precedent. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard vocalized he felt that one debate was sufficient and reviewed past debates. The debate could be streamed for citizens to view at home. Alderman Benson vocalized his desires for the debate(s) to be off town campus, hosted by a third party, and Town personnel not be used.

B. Amendment to ONWASA's Articles of Incorporation (Mayor McDermon / Alderman Grant)

C. Request from Onslow Water and Sewer Authority – Resolution 2025-04 to amend the Bylaws of Onslow Water and Sewer Authority – Mayor McDermon and Frankie Howard

Items B and C were discussed together. Frankie Howard from ONWASA reviewed the amendment with the Board. ONWASA approved the amendments to their Bylaws but require the municipalities to also approve it. Holly Ridge, the City of Jacksonville, and Swansboro have all approved of the changes.

Motion— Alderman Benson made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-04 to amend the Bylaws of Onslow Water and Sewer Authority. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

D. ONWASA update on Operations (Alderman Grant)

Frankie Howard provided a brief background of himself, provided the Board of the number of gallons of water produced a year by ONWASA, and the service area map. He reviewed the annual production by source from the years 1987 – 2024. Howard reviewed the monthly comparisons between different systems and reviewed the water masterplan updates. Lastly, he reviewed active projects that will impact North Topsail Beach and answered questions from Board members.

E. Registration and Sponsorship for N.C. Beach, Inlet and Waterway Association (NCBIWA)2025 fall conference on Thursday, October 30, 2025, and Friday, October 31, 2025, in Wilmington, N.C. at the Aloft Hotel (Manager Derian)

Manager Derian reported to the Board that the NC Beach, Inlet, and Waterway Association 2025 fall conference will be held in Wilmington, NC on Thursday, October 30, 2025, and Friday, October 31, 2025, at the Aloft Hotel. Members who will to attend should email Manager Derian and Clerk Lexi Stanfield to reserve their spots. Manager Derian reported historically that the Board has paid for a Silver sponsorship.

Motion— Alderman Benson made a motion to approve the Silver Level sponsorship in the amount of \$1,200. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Services of Off-Duty Officers (Manager Derian)

Manager Derian Reported historically North Topsail Beach Police off-duty cops have provided services. It appears there is no contract in place, only a documented fee schedule in the budget. Staff have been advised to cease all off-duty work until a contract can be drafted/ The Fee Schedule would also need revisions. Chief Younginer provided background information on practices used historically. Alderman Benson stated his opposition to off-duty work. Alderman Pletl stated her support for a new fee schedule. Alderman Benson, Alderman Olszewski were against off-duty officers providing services. Alderman Grant and Mayor Pro Tem Leonard were in support once a contract was in place.

XI. OPEN FORUM

Mr. Anders, 136 Seagull Lane, spoke about signage and violations in the town, and gave kudos to the Public Works department.

Rusty Walker, 115 Seagull Lane, spoke about visual division among the Board of Aldermen.

Mark Barefoot, 246 Sand Piper Road, vocalized concerns with off duty officers working.

XII. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Ferguson had no report to share.

XIII. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor McDermon thanked everyone for coming and shared appreciation for staff. She asked Manager Derian to meet with Ocean City Jazz Festival to see what needs are needed for the next festival.

XIV. ALDERMEN'S REPORT

Alderman Grant spoke about meeting and greets with citizens of Ocean City and the meeting they held where they discussed water and sewer issues. He asked the Board to think about funding for the Jazz Festival and road repairs in the upcoming FY 2026-2027 budget.

Alderman Grant spoke briefly on ONWASA and growth in Onslow county.

Alderman Olszewski thanked the Police and Fire Chiefs for giving their reports. She stated she would like Public Works to also give an update in the future.

Mayor Pro Tem Leonard thanked the Manager and Staff for their work. He reminded citizens that The Reel Housewives of Topsail Island Bike ride is on October 4, 2025. He provided a brief CBRA update.

Alderman Benson thanked citizens for attending and brought up concerns about funding for the beach renourishment lacking on the state level.

Alderman Pletl thanked citizens for attending and watching at home, as well as the Manager and staff for their work. She reported on the Sea Turtle Nest season, which had a total of

ninety-one nests. She thanked the Police who assisted with parking and asked citizens to keep ocean facing property lights off at night.

XV. CLOSED SESSION

Motion—Mayor Pro Tem Leonard made a motion to go into closed session for N.C.G.S 143-318.11a (6) Personnel and item (3) Consultation with the Attorney. Alderman Olszewski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion—Alderman Olszewski made a motion to return from open session. Alderman Benson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Ferguson reported no action was taken in closed session.

Manager Derian requested the Board consider the approval of a reclassification of an employee from a grade 6 Office Assistant to a grade 11 Program Support Specialist without any salary increase.

Motion—Alderman Pletl made a motion to approve the reclassification with a salary increase. Alderman Olszewski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion—Mayor Pro Tem Leonard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Olszewski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:38PM.