

**Town of Swansboro  
Board of Commissioners  
February 12, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes**

In attendance: Mayor John Davis, Mayor Pro Tem William Justice, Commissioner Jeffrey Conaway, Commissioner Joseph Brown, and Commissioner Douglas Eckendorf. Mayor Davis shared that Commissioner Larry Philpott had submitted his resignation earlier in the day, effective immediately, therefore the board currently had 1 vacancy.

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**Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge**

The special meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Mayor Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance. The purpose of the meeting was to receive a presentation from Mark Sutherland of JOED related to Economic Development in the Swansboro area, EOC/PSB Site Search Committee appointments and Planning Board appointments.

**Public Comment**

Citizens were offered an opportunity to address the Board regarding items listed on the agenda. No comments were given.

**Adoption of Agenda**

On a motion by Commissioner Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the agenda was adopted unanimously.

**Appointments/Recognitions/Presentations**

*EOC/PSB Site Selection Committee*

Interim Manager Barlow reviewed that at its January 23, 2024, meeting, the Board of Commissioners created a committee for the purpose of searching for a site to build the EOC/PSB. Keith Walsh was appointed as chair and provided with the responsibility for recommending members.

Mr. Walsh had recommended the following members:

- Commissioner Doug Eckendorf
- Melissa Anderson
- Junior Freeman
- Roy Herrick

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Justice, seconded by Commissioner Brown, Resolution 2024-R2 creating the EOC/PSB Site Selection Committee and appointing the members recommended was adopted unanimously.

*Board Appointment*

Town Clerk Fender shared that Eric Young was appointed to the Planning Board at the

January 23, 2024, regular meeting, however he declined the appointment. Therefore, an appointment was needed for an in-town seat. A vacancy still existed for one ETJ seat.

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Justice, seconded by Commissioner Eckendorf, Jerry Seddon was unanimously appointed to the vacant in-town seat on the Planning Board.

#### *Economic Development Presentation*

Mark Sutherland - Executive Director of JOED provided the board with an update and reviewed his slides, attached herein with the power point presentation of the meeting.

In response to inquiries from the board regarding "Project Coffee", Mr. Southerland shared the following:

- Would be 30-acre light industrial park with multiple businesses.
- 200 +/- primary jobs.
- Estimated tax base was \$30 million.
- A draft resolution in support of the project could be provided for approval at the February 13, 2023, meeting.
- To date only a preliminary engineering report had been obtained, however, proceeding further requires support of Phase I from the Town.
- JOED has a good track record for obtaining grants.

In response to inquiries from the board, Planning Correll clarified that setback, buffers, architectural elements, wetland preservation and other matters such as those would be addressed by the Town Unified Development Ordinance. Additionally, to accommodate certain needs that the UDO prohibits or restricts, a developer can apply for Conditional Zoning, and or variances.

Board members supported adding adoption of a Resolution in support of "Project Coffee" to the next regular meeting agenda.

The board allowed for comments from the public and Charles Rawls urged them to support the project.

Board members shared the following comments/concerns:

Commissioner Conaway and Mayor John Davis both had concerns with increase of cost for Fire and Police Services, and more congestion on Highway 24 with 200+ jobs being added at some point.

Commissioner Eckendorf shared that planned growth usually invites more capital and allows for planning for success.

Mayor Pro Tem Justice shared his appreciation for the presentation, while he supported the project, he would like to see the project handled in a manner that infrastructure would not be stressed.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Commissioner Conaway, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Justice, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm.