

Town of Swansboro
Board of Commissioners
January 9, 2023, Regular Meeting

In attendance: Mayor John Davis, Mayor Pro Tem Frank Tursi, Commissioner PJ Pugliese, Commissioner Larry Philpott, Mayor Pro Tem Tursi, Commissioner Pat Turner, and Commissioner Jeffrey Conaway.

Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Mayor Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Junior Freeman of 714 W. Corbett Avenue shared that as a member of the EOC/PSB Committee he recalled that exploring a regional/joint operational center was not supposed to be considered and urged the board to eliminate that from the Public Safety/Emergency Operations Center Feasibility Study.

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Items

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Tursi, seconded by Commissioner Philpott, the agenda as amended to remove *Demolition by Neglect Public Hearing* and move the *FY 23-24 Budget Schedule* to non-consent, was approved unanimously.

Directions were provided for the Planner and Attorney to collaborate on the *Demolition by Neglect* text amendment to ensure consistency and revisit at a future meeting.

Business Non-Consent

Public Safety/Emergency Operations Center Feasibility Study

Manager Webb reviewed that a contract proposal by Becker Morgan was offered for Phase 1 – Feasibility Study for the Public Safety/Emergency Operations Center in the amount of \$19, 120. Becker Morgan was selected by the Town in November 2022 as the consulting architectural firm.

The goal of the Feasibility Study phase was to define the scope of the project in terms of operations and physical construction within the context of a defined budget. Becher Morgan would evaluate each physical location along with renovation and/or new construction options and would present and review all options. Last, they would prepare a Feasibility Study Report that included concise scopes, budgets, and schedules for implementation of the selected option or options.

Board members agreed that the option of researching a regional/joint operational facility was desired to ensure all options were explored and that it should remain so that justification can be provided on feasibility.

On a motion by Commissioner Philpott seconded by Commissioner Conaway and with unanimous approval the manager was authorized to execute the contract.

NCLM 2023-2024 Advocacy Goal Statements

Manager Webb reviewed that the NCLM had published its 2023-2024 Advocacy Goal Statements. Cities and Towns were asked to review and vote on the proposed goals so that cities and towns have a focused state and federal advocacy agenda in the 23-24 legislative biennium which begins in January at the NC General Assembly. Each municipality will cast a single vote by selecting 10 of the 16 proposed advocacy goals and by designating a voting delegate.

The 10 goals chosen were:

- Revitalize vacant and abandoned properties with enhanced legal tools and funding.
- Create an adequate and permanent funding stream for local infrastructure.
- Extend deadlines for completion of federal infrastructure projects.
- Expand state transportation funding streams for construction and maintenance for municipal and state-owned secondary roads.
- Support integrated and multi-modal transportation solutions.
- Expand incentives and funding for local economic development.
- Enhance state systems and resources for local law enforcement officer recruitment, training, and retention.
- Revise state contracting laws to better protect public entities from the effects of inflation.
- Update annexation petition thresholds to make voluntary annexations easier to initiate.
- Provide local revenue options beyond property tax.

Manager Webb was appointed as the voting delegate to cast the Towns vote by January 12, 2023.

Future Agenda Topics

Future agenda items were shared for visibility and comment. In addition, an opportunity was provided for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas.

The following items were addressed:

- The FT21/22 Audit Report was moved from the January 23, 2023, meeting to the February 13, 2023, meeting.

- Church Street Dock Safety Policy was identified as needed to come before the board soon.

Items Moved from Consent

FY 23-24 Budget Schedule

Board members expressed their interest in having more than one workshop session. It was preferred that the first one occur earlier on and include the needs/request of staff.

Manager Webb advised that she would reach out to board members by email to pinpoint the first workshop date and revise the meeting schedule from there.

Public Comment

Dennis Lewis of 786 Perkins Road in Pikeville NC and introduced himself as the pyrotechnic operator for the Town fireworks. He shared his dissatisfaction with the board in regard to the recent October 2022 Mullet Festival event and the accommodations in which the town provided for him to facilitate the fireworks. He claimed that the location was inadequate and for that reason he shared he would no longer provide his services to the Town for fireworks and urged the board to begin their search to quickly locate another pyrotechnics operator.

Manager Comments

Manager Webb shared that the process to remove the abandon boats in the Towns nearby waterways was moving along.

Board Comments

Commissioner Conaway shared that he would like to see the public more involved with the budget process.

Mayor Davis shared that he desired for the upcoming budget to not include a tax increase and that he hoped to see an increase in salaries for the police and fire departments. Regarding the Fireworks contractor resigning, he requested that a closed session be held to discuss the situation with personnel.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Tursi, seconded by Commissioner Philpott, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.