

2nd Amendment/Weapon Allowance at Town Hall

Manager Barlow reviewed that discussion was requested focusing on the rights contained within the 2nd amendment to the US Constitution, pertaining to the allowance of weapons at Town Hall was requested by the Board. It was noted that the town ordinance, specifically addresses concealed carry but does not explicitly prohibit open carry.

Commissioner Eckendorf expressed concerns about the "no weapons" sticker on the building, stating that it may give a false sense of security and could make the building a target.

Board members highlighted the importance of consulting staff, as they work in the building daily and should feel safe in their workplace. There was a consensus that the current sign may need to be revised for accuracy, in compliance with state laws.

Several board members and staff voiced varying perspectives on concealed carry for employees, with some advocating for training and support if employees wished to carry. Concerns about liability and public perception were also raised, with the legal counsel explaining that reasonable regulations, such as prohibiting or allowing weapons with appropriate measures, are legally permissible. The discussion also emphasized the need for practical safety measures, including installing panic buttons in the front office for staff to alert authorities in emergencies.

The discussion concluded with three actionable steps:

- Reviewing the signage for legal accuracy
- Exploring the installation of panic buttons for front office safety
- Gathering input from staff and the public about their preferences on the matter

Proposal to Establish a Funding Policy/Funding Request Application for Nonprofit Organizations

Manager Barlow reviewed that at its October 22, 2024, regular meeting, the Board directed staff to develop a funding policy/funding request application for nonprofit organizations. This policy aims to establish a clear and equitable framework for allocating resources to local nonprofits that provide essential services, align with the Town's priorities, and support community welfare.

In response to inquiries from the board Manager Barlow or Finance Director Johnson clarified the following:

- Nonprofits must demonstrate a significant presence or service to Swansboro residents, provide detailed information about their funding needs, and meet specific documentation requirements, including proof of nonprofit status and IRS tax forms.