

Town of Swansboro
Board of Commissioners
June 12, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes

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

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

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

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Items

On a motion by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Philpott, the agenda and the below consent items were approved unanimously.

Consent Items:

- January 23, 2023, Closed Session
- February 13, 2023, Regular Meeting
- February 13, 2023, Closed Session
- Lease Agreement between Town of Swansboro and Spectrum Southeast LLC

Appointments/Recognitions/Presentations

Employee Introductions

Town Clerk Fender introduced the new Administrative Assistant, Jackie Stevens, sharing that she had 12 years' experience in the customer service industry, a graduate of Swansboro High School and a mother of 3.

Municipal Finance Month Proclamation

Mayor Davis presented Finance Director Johnson and her department with a proclamation designating June as Finance Month. Mayor Davis shared there are no questions about the audits from the Finance Department. The board shared their appreciation for all their hard work. Director Johnson shared that together the finance department is a great team, and she could not do the job without them.

Board Appointments

Town Clerk, Alissa Fender reviewed that due to expiration of terms or resignations, there were several board appointments or reappointments needed.

- Two (2) seats for the Board of Adjustment
- One (1) seat for the Planning Board

Ralph Kohlmann and Wayne Mixon were reappointed to the Board of Adjustment.

Joseph Brown was appointed to the Planning Board.

Public Hearing

FY 2023/2024 Annual Budget

Town Manager Webb reviewed that the FY 2023/2024 Annual Budget was presented following discussions at two workshops, one on February 23rd and the other on May 17, 2023. The budget was prepared in accordance with N.C.G.S. Chapter 159, the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act and provided to the Board of Commissioners and the Public on June 1, 2023. As required, all funds within the budget are balanced, and all revenues and expenditures are identified for FY 2023/2024.

The total budget was \$5,683,022, which represents an increase of 11% from the FY 2022/2023 Amended Budget of \$5,122,168. The tax rate is proposed to remain unchanged at \$0.35 per \$100 valuation. Following input during the two budget workshops, the General Fund Budget for FY 2023/2024 was balanced utilizing \$385,883 of our current year's projected surplus. A remaining projected surplus or amount thereof of \$52,013 would be deposited into the general fund balance at the close of FY 22/23. The proposed budget maintains an unassigned fund balance of approximately 52% over expenditures.

Funded highlights included:

- 4.4% COLA and 4% Merit (based on performance evaluations)
- New Personnel (FT Fire Captain \$68,081, FT Dockmaster/Downtown Supervisor \$66,659, and PT Dock Attendant \$9,656 – including benefits)
- NCLM Property & Casualty Increased 10.5%
- NCLM Workers Comp Decreased 7%
- NCLM Group Health Insurance Increased 10%
- Capital Improvements Plan \$173,880
- Capital Outlay \$132,104

In response to inquiries from the board, Town Manager Webb clarified that the% merit increase would be between 0% to 4%, based on the work performance of the employee and determined by the department head.

The public hearing was opened at 5:47 pm and then closed.

On a motion from Commissioner Philpott, seconded by Commissioner Turner, the FY2023/2024 Budget Ordinance w/Tax Rate, Fee Schedule, Salary Schedule, and FY2023/2024 balance with surplus was approved unanimously.

Business Non-Consent

Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Presenter Jennifer Beedle, Consultant for the Engineering Firm, McAdams

Jennifer Beedle, consultant for McAdams Engineering Firm reviewed that Swansboro Parks and Recreation contracted with McAdams to update the 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan. Consultant Beedle reviewed her slides that covered the following:

- The purpose was to prioritize goals and objectives for the course of the ten-year planning frame; allows to identify deficiencies across the Parks and Recreation system and identifies strong points; receiving information in real time from community what they wanted and needed in the facilities; served as a ten-year work plan for Swansboro Parks and Recreation staff. The staff, community, and Advisory Board were involved and aware of the information received.
- The process included Assessment of Parks & Facilities, maintenance assessment, Demographic trends analysis, community engagement, level of service, program assessment and financial assessment.
- The progress starts with research, analyze the findings & recommendations to create the final plan.
- The portfolio included:
 - o Assessment of community context which showed the population at 3,217 in 2021 with an estimated population of 3,766 in 2031.
 - o Parks & Recreation amenities were identified as an idea physical environment that allowed for the public to engage with natural resources, well maintained.
 - o Recreation programs are not over programmed and offered a diverse range and staff was attuned to the residents needs and wants and provides special event and festivals for residents and visitors.
 - o Operations & Maintenance was proactive in addressing maintenance, and managing the boat docks.
 - o Level of service, in order to meet the industry standard of 2 square feet of indoor space per capita, an additional 500 sq ft of space is needed currently with an additional 1,600 needed in the next ten years.

Consultant Beedle shared that the community engagement resulted in 227 survey responses, and 6 staff listening sessions. Of the survey responses Recreation Amenities needs top 5 results were Special Events + Festivals (118%), Outdoor Fitness Classes

(109%), Indoor Fitness Classes (105%), Swimming (98%), and Educational Programs (97%). The top 4 needs for Programs were Hiking Trails (39%), Playgrounds (34%), Bicycling-Roadway Infrastructure/Bike Lanes (34%), Canoe/Kayak Access (33%), Saltwater Fishing Access (33%); Bicycling-Mountain Biking (33%), Outdoor Swimming Pool (32%).

Consultant Beedle reviewed the established recommendations:

Parks & Amenities

- Position parks and recreation as an essential service for a growing community.
- Continue to enhance and expand the park system to meet community needs and wants.
- Activate underused park spaces.

Programs

- Develop programs that activate spaces and encourage the community to experience parks, recreation facilities, and activities.
- Base decisions for introducing new programming to community needs.

Operations & Maintenance

- Identify and track maintenance needs of the existing park system.
- Build staff capacity to meet growing community needs.

In response to inquiries from the board, Consultant Beedle clarified the following:

- Youth was 0-10 years of age and Teen was 11-17 years of age.
- Both residents and nonresidents were polled.
- The reported percentages were more than 100 in total because the person was able to pick more than one item.
- The survey response of 227 was a high rate even though the board felt that amount was low

On a motion by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Philpott the Parks & Recreation Master Plan was adopted unanimously.

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 added for future review.

- Proclamation for Mr. Liko's 100th birthday
- NC 24 Superstreet Presentation

Public Comment

Tim Vannoy of 105 Cormorant Drive shared that the Memorial Day event recently observed is needed in this community and thanked those who planned and were involved.

Mayor Davis shared that the Veterans Memorial Gardens committee, Swansboro Baseball & Softball Association and Swansboro United Methodist Church were instrumental in the event.

Board Comments

Board members thanked staff on their efforts during the budget process, the Parks & Recreation Master Plan and the success of the Arts by the Sea Festival.

Mayor Davis shared that he enjoyed the High School Graduates Motorcade, and that Military Appreciation Day was successful and possibly the largest turnout in the last 8 years. He further shared that with regard to the budget he was concerned with the \$66,000 position for facility supervisor. Additionally, he was concerned that the consultants did not reach out to more of the community.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Tursi, seconded by Commissioner Conaway, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.