

Town of Swansboro
Board of Commissioners
December 9, 2025, Organizational Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Mayor William Justice, Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Conaway, Commissioner Pat Turner, Commissioner Joseph Brown, Commissioner Douglas Eckendorf and Commissioner Tamara Pieratti.

Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm and Mayor Justice led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Justice took the opportunity to recognize several individuals in attendance.

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 Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Turner, the consent items below and the agenda as presented were unanimously approved.

- October 28, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- October 28, 2025, Closed Session Minutes
- November 17, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
- November 17, 2025, Closed Session Minutes
- November 25, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- November 25, 2025, Closed Session Minutes

Appointments/Recognitions/Presentations

Samuel Swann Bland Community Service Award

The Samuel Swann Bland Community Service Award was created to honor the diligence, hard work, leadership, and dedication that characterized the contributions of Sam Bland to the public and the Swansboro Community. The award was made annually to a public employee, civic leader, or community volunteer that has demonstrated the qualities of outstanding dedication to the improvement of community services that were exhibited in the career and contributions of Samuel Swann Bland.

Mayor Justice announced Commissioner Turner as the recipient of the Samuel Swann Bland Community Service Award, in honor of her exceptional dedication and leadership over 30 years of service to the Town of Swansboro. This award celebrated Mrs. Turner's diligent contributions since moving to Swansboro in 1992, including her pivotal roles on the Swansboro Planning Board, where she served as chairperson for the majority of her tenure, and as a Town Commissioner. Turner's impactful input in shaping the town's strategic plan, land use plan, and UDO was highlighted, as well as her professional demeanor and openness to diverse viewpoints.

Business Non-Consent

Oaths of Office Ceremony

Newly elected officials were required to qualify by taking the oath of office prescribed in Article VI, of the North Carolina Constitution.

Mayor Justice and Commissioner Conaway were sworn in, with their oaths administered by Representative Wyatt Gable.

Commissioner Herbert and Commissioner Vannoy were sworn in, with their oaths administered by Onslow County Commissioners Chairman Tim Foster.

Following their oaths, Commissioner Herbert expressed his appreciation to the citizens of Swansboro and pledged to listen to residents and make decisions in the best interest of the town. Commissioner Vannoy expressed gratitude to his supporters, emphasized collaboration with Wayne Herbert, and prioritized transparency, controlled growth, infrastructure, school overcrowding, traffic planning, historical preservation, and small business support, with decisions based on practical benefits for Swansboro.

Town Clerk Alissa Fender explained the process for selecting a Mayor Pro Tem, ONWASA Representative Appointment, and East Carolina Council Appointment, noting that each commissioner would be provided with a paper ballot to cast their vote for their preferred candidate. The ballots required the commissioners to sign their names for record-keeping purposes to ensure transparency and accountability in the voting process. After completing the votes, the ballots were collected and tallied to determine the outcomes.

Mayor Pro Tem Appointment

In accordance with NCGS 160A-70 and Town Code 30.06, the Board of Commissioners shall select one of their number to act as Mayor Pro Tem.

The ballot count identified Commissioner Conaway as the member selected for Mayor Pro Tem. On a motion by Commissioner Herbert, seconded by Commissioner Vannoy, with unanimous approval, Commissioner Conaway was appointed as Mayor Pro Tem.

Onslow County Commissioners Chairman Tim Foster administered the Oath of Office for Mayor Pro Tem to Commissioner Conaway.

Appointment of Representative to ONWASA

ONWASA's Board of Directors were appointed to three-year terms by the local governments in the service area. The Board was composed of eight members whose regular meetings were held at Jacksonville City Hall, 815 New Bridge Street, Jacksonville, NC.

The ballot count identified Commissioner Herbert as the member selected for Swansboro's representative to ONWASA. On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Pieratti, with unanimous approval, Commissioner Herbert was appointed as the Swansboro representative to ONWASA.

East Carolina Council Appointment

Annually, a Board member was selected to serve as a local jurisdiction representative on the East Carolina Council (ECC) General Membership Board.

The ballot count identified Commissioner Pieratti as the member selected for Swansboro's representative to the East Carolina Council. On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Vannoy, with unanimous approval, Commissioner Pieratti was appointed as the Swansboro representative to ECC.

2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule

Town Clerk Fender reviewed that NCGS 160A-71 provides that the Board establishes a time and place for its regular meetings. The 2026 meeting schedule had been prepared based on the Town's Administrative Policy 1F which stated that the Board of Commissioners meeting dates fall on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. A meeting schedule for the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month with the exception of October due to the date falling near a Town event was provided for consideration. Once adopted, the meeting schedule would be posted on the bulletin board outside the Administrative Offices at Town Hall and on the Town website.

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Herbert, the proposed 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule for the Board of Commissioners was unanimously approved.

Budget Ordinance Amendment #2026-3

Town Manager Jon Barlow presented a budget ordinance amendment to address a mold issue in the Public Safety Building. He explained that the issue was primarily caused by improper or inadequate ventilation materials and uninsulated ventilation equipment, which was creating condensation in the ceiling and resulting in a significant mold problem.

Manager Barlow shared that a proposal had been received from Green Home Solutions for \$11,780 to remediate the mold, clean the ductwork, and replace inadequate ventilation material. He noted this was the same company that successfully performed mold remediation at the visitor center.

Manager Barlow also mentioned the related issue of the building's deteriorating roof, which public works staff has been trying to repair, and stressed the importance of addressing the current issues for the safety of the police and fire personnel who occupy the building 24/7.

On a motion by Commissioner Pieratti, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, Budget Ordinance Amendment #2026-3 for mold remediation at the Public Safety Building was unanimously approved.

Future Agenda Topics

Future agenda items were shared for visibility and comments. In addition, an opportunity was provided for the board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for

placement on future agendas. No additional items were added but the following discussion occurred.

A discussion was proposed for the January agenda regarding improvements to the visitor center bathrooms, emphasizing the need to optimize space and present plans to the public and business community. The current staff effort involves redesigning the facility to expand from two to potentially six- or eight-bathrooms, including showers and laundry amenities, leading to a transient boater center. It was clarified that once a design was approved, it would be subject to engineering, historic preservation review, contractor bidding, and funding approval processes. Additionally, there was a suggestion to begin reviewing the town's zoning and land use plans for revision cost during the upcoming budget cycle. Finally, the need to address public water access issues, where certain areas have been "overtaken" and restrict public enjoyment, was also raised.

Public Comment

Citizens were offered an opportunity to address the Board for no more than five minutes regarding items not listed on the agenda. No comments were made

Board Comments

The new board members were welcomed and all commissioners congratulated Ms. Turner on receiving the Sam Bland Award and thanked her for her service.

Commissioner Vannoy raised concerns about construction without proper permits and environmental protections at the Wawa development, noting the absence of silt fencing. Building Inspector Paul Ingram explained that groundwork and demolition were permitted with obtained permits and mentioned that the company awaited approval on one final item before further progress.

Commissioner Herbert expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve and requested patience as he learns the role.

Mayor Justice expressed confidence that the new board would work well together. He thanked town staff and encouraged community involvement.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Herbert, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.