

MINUTES
OAK ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL RETREAT
January 19, 2016 – 8:30 A.M.
OAK ISLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT – TRAINING ROOM

Present: Mayor Cin Brochure, Mayor Pro Tempore Jim Medlin, Councilors Sheila Bell, Charlie Blalock, Loman Scott and Jeff Winecoff, Town Manager Tim Holloman, Town Attorney Brian Edes and Town Clerk Lisa P. Stites, CMC.

Mayor Cin Brochure called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Town Manager Tim Holloman introduced Chris May, director of the Cape Fear Council of Government, who served as facilitator for the meeting.

Mr. May explained how a municipal government works, and the differences between federal, state and county responsibilities. Mr. May also explained Dillon's Rule, which mandates that towns may only handle such business as the state allows. The most important guiding principle is stewardship; citizens have faith in the elected officials to care for their town and elected officials need to turn it over at the end of their term in better shape than when they entered office.

Mr. May and the Board also discussed what makes an effective Mayor, Council Member and Manager. Mayor: honest, leader, dedicated, communicator, hear both sides, see the big picture, vision, passion, integrity, engaged, consensus builder, team builder. Council: ability to work together to build consensus, respect others' opinions, focused/committed, approachable/visible, common sense, compassionate/empathetic, be a researcher, hear both sides before acting, respect chain of command. Manager: do not try to please everybody, gain confidence of the Council and the people, integrity, use your resources wisely, inclusive communication, approachable, good relations with Council, adaptable, knowledgeable, experienced.

After a brief recess, Finance Director Dave Hatten gave a financial update. He reviewed current revenues with numbers from this time last year as well as with what was budgeted. He did the same with expenditures. Mr. Hatten said he thought the wastewater fund should break even or at least come close; revenues are increased thanks to the rate increase, and expenses are under control. Revenue at the golf course has also increased. A copy of his report is attached and is hereby made a part of these Minutes. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin asked what was going on with the fire trucks. Mr. Holloman said the Town still owed \$575,000, and if the third truck sells, that would come down to approximately \$250,000. The General Fund debt has been refinanced; staff will provide a report soon once the numbers are compiled.

Mr. Holloman reviewed the list of Council/Town accomplishments from 2015 that was provided in the agenda packet; a copy is attached and is hereby made a part of these Minutes. Council discussed the Town's minimum housing ordinances and how the Town can enforce them. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin asked how it applied to the mobile home section; Mr. Holloman said that the ordinance would be enforced equally in all parts of town. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said that there are some dilapidated mobile homes that need the Town's attention. Mr. Holloman noted that enforcement is mostly complaint-driven at this time. He also said that code enforcement time is sometimes taken up with the new polycart rules. Mayor Brochure asked if citizens could send in pictures of violations. Councilor Winecoff said that he had been asking for two years for a work order system for citizens to use and that was supposed to come online with the new financial software. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin suggested sending the code enforcement officer to a small section each day. Mr. Holloman explained the code enforcement process of sending letters, setting hearings, etc.

Council took a brief recess from 10:26 a.m. to 10:37 a.m.

Emerging Issues: Mr. Holloman explained that the packet included suggestions from citizens, elected officials, staff and the survey results from the Comprehensive Plan process. Items to put on the Bucket List for 2016: Strengthen tree ordinances (subheads for stormwater and lot size versus building size), dune protection ordinance, beach renourishment and funding, paid parking or a day beach pass, enhance appearance codes and minimum housing and enforcement, polycart rules (out-of-town property owners upset with the pickup schedule – possibly reschedule pickup days), accommodations tax collections from mom and pop or online rentals, handicapped beach access enhanced and maintained (public/private), farmers market administration, brown and white goods pickup discussion (research using a private contractor once a year), ensure occupancy tax required percentage for marketing is appropriated, agenda preparation and streamline meetings (committee reports to be supplied in writing, limit presentations to 10-15 minutes, don't have clerk read comments at the meeting, Proclamations not read aloud and/or add Resolutions to the Consent Agenda, reduce public comments to 3 minutes), info sessions, Town Hall meetings.

Mr. Holloman and Council also discussed paid parking. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said the Town funded a 12-mile long park (the beach). Mayor Brochure said that the tourists come and spend money, and that is good for the Town. But those who come for the day do not spend money here, and it costs the taxpayers to clean the trash, etc. Mayor Brochure said that a day pass was something that could be done in-house. Mr. Holloman said that if the Town implemented paid parking, he would recommend using an outside service. Mr. Holloman said that paid parking could be something that wouldn't be done year round, just April through October, for example. Businesses could also be involved by buying passes for customers or giving discounts with a parking receipt.

Regarding the Farmers Market, a proposal from the Market Ambassadors is to create a non-profit group that would operate the Farmers Market and run other similar events throughout the year. Mr. Holloman said that the group would handle applications etc., and pay a fee to the Town for use of the property. There would not be competition between the Market and other similar functions in town, such as the annual Arts & Crafts Festival.

Council took a recess at 12:14 p.m. for lunch.

Council resumed the discussion of emerging issues with the following topics being added to the list: entrance signs lighted and landscaped, street lights town-wide, have a projects page on the website, parking/use of street ends, public records request policy that compensates for cost, 911 to BrunsCo – was this a good idea, update robo calls for citizen contact about issues/warnings, reconsider number of required public hearings for standard topics and have two public hearings only for controversial topics, enhance recreational facilities to be more beneficial to citizens, install GPS on Town vehicles to track where they are, architectural standards, investigate and manage morale issues, keep all of Council informed of “hot issues,” enhance website (more input from department heads), special events signage rules.

Regarding putting GPS units in vehicles, Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said he didn't think it was necessary for the size of town Oak Island is. Mr. Holloman said that it would give the Town data about where the vehicles have been. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said that if police administration would get out and about in town, they would be aware if the officers on duty were collected in one place. Mr. Holloman suggested putting the units in just the leaf collection trucks.

Council reviewed the suggestions from staff. Some of the requests, such as additional IT help and reorganizing the collections office may not be necessary if Brunswick County takes the utilities. Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said that some of the Police Department suggestions should wait as a new Chief will be hired this year and may have different priorities. Regarding the Fire Department's request for a training tower at the airport, Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin said that he would rather see all the neighboring towns get involved and contribute financially (St. James Fire Department has pledged to contribute \$200,000). Council also discussed the suggestion of bringing grounds maintenance back in-house. Council members have received comments on both sides of the issue. Council also discussed proposed work for Smith Park that would be moot if the County takes over the utilities system. Council discussed whether the deal with Brunswick County would include transferring this Park to the County; Council consensus is that the Town would want to keep Bill Smith Park. Councilor Bell asked about how residents without Time Warner can view the Council meetings. Council also discussed the need for a new bus; Mr. Holloman will get more information on use of the bus. Mr. Holloman also spoke about his suggestion to offer more employee benefits and to increase staff training. Regarding hiring a new Police Chief, Mr. Holloman said the Town would use an in-house assessment center, including a citizen group, leadership team group and a law enforcement group.

Council resumed discussion at 2:50 p.m., following a short recess. Council members and the Mayor were asked to rank their top ten priorities. The top ten were chosen as follows (with the elected official championing each item noted in parenthesis): strengthen tree ordinance (Councilor Winecoff), beach renourishment and funding (Councilor Bell), paid parking or other options for a day pass (Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin), enhance and maintain handicapped beach access and possibly adding public/private, signage (Mayor Pro Tempore Medlin), brown/white good pickup (Councilor Blalock), ensure occupancy tax percentage for market is appropriated (Mayor Brochure), agenda preparation and streamline meetings -- written committee reports to be supplied in writing, limit presentations to 10-15 minutes, don't have clerk read comments at the meeting, Proclamations not read or add Resolutions to the Consent Agenda, reduce public comments to 3 minutes (Councilor Scott), entrance signs (Mayor Brochure), investigate and manage employee morale (Councilor Bell), enhance appearance codes and minimum housing (Councilor Winecoff), enhance website including more input from department heads (Mayor Brochure).

Councilor Winecoff made a motion to adjourn at 3:16 p.m., Councilor Blalock seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Cin Brochure, Mayor

ATTESTED: _____
Lisa P. Stites, CMC
Town Clerk

Clerk's Statement: Minutes are in compliance with the open meetings laws. The purpose of minutes per the open meetings laws is to provide a record of the actions taken by a Council or a Board and evidence that the actions were taken according to proper procedures. All actions of the Council are recorded in the official minutes. Not all portions of Town of Oak Island meetings are recorded verbatim in the official minutes, with general discussion items, reports, presentations, and public comments being paraphrased or summarized in many instances. Public comments in writing should be submitted to the clerk via hard copy, electronic mail, or other means so as to ensure an exact verbatim account. The Town of Oak Island provides full coverage of meetings on Government Channel 8 so that the Citizens and the Public may view and listen to the meetings in their entirety.