



**Town of Beaufort, NC**  
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**Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**6:00 PM Monday, February 09, 2026**  
**Train Depot, 614 Broad Street**

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**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Harker called the February 9, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She invited everyone to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk called the roll.

Present: Mayor Harker, Commissioner Gillikin, Commissioner Spiegler, Commissioner Matthews, Commissioner Cooper, and Commissioner LoPiccolo.

Absent: None

**Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

**Items of Consent**

1. Meeting Minutes: January 12, 2026
2. FY 27 Budget Calendar

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the Items of Consent.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

**Public Comment**

**Ed Seelaus: 108 Charles Street (Beaufort, NC)**

Mr. Seelaus addressed the Board regarding ongoing flooding concerns in the Charles Street neighborhood. He explained that he previously organized neighborhood residents to bring attention to worsening drainage issues, which resulted in the Town clearing drainage ditches and replacing an underground pipe behind the community. Mr. Seelaus expressed appreciation for those efforts, noting the improvements were effective for a period of time. Mr. Seelaus stated that flooding concerns

resurfaced during development of a project located behind the neighborhood. He explained that, although he had been assured by the Town Engineer and Planning Director that the elevation of the development would not create drainage impacts, he observed additional fill material being added after initial grading, raising concerns about increased elevation levels. Mr. Seelaus reported that he requested to review elevation plats to confirm compliance and was informed the matter would be reviewed with the project engineer; however, he stated he has not received a response despite multiple follow-up communications. Mr. Seelaus described renewed flooding occurring within the neighborhood, particularly near a central intersection, and reported experiencing significant property damage, including foundation cracking and repairs requiring structural work to his home. He expressed concern that the flooding may be related to nearby development activity and requested the Town investigate the cause of recurring flooding and identify potential remedies.

### **Shane Guthrie: Candidate for Sheriff**

Mr. Shane Guthrie introduced himself as a candidate for Carteret County Sheriff. He stated he is a Carteret County native with 34 years of law enforcement experience, including service with Dare County, the Beaufort Police Department, and the Pitt County Sheriff's Office, where he retired after 30 years. He noted he currently works part-time serving civil papers and returned to Carteret County three years ago. Mr. Guthrie shared that his decision to run for sheriff followed the current sheriff's announcement to retire and pursue congressional office. He outlined several initiatives he would seek to implement if elected, including equipping all patrol vehicles with AEDs, establishing a youth mentorship summer camp program, creating a Citizens Academy to promote transparency and public understanding of law enforcement operations, and developing a senior citizen welfare check program utilizing trained volunteers.

### **Bob Cole: 500 Front Street (Beaufort, NC)**

Mr. Bob Cole introduced himself as the new General Manager for F3 Marina. He provided an overview of his professional background, including military customer service and sales experience, followed by approximately 15 years in marina and boat service operations, where he advanced from dockhand to managing a large service department in Maine. He described his customer-service, focused management style and expressed enthusiasm about returning to Beaufort to work with F3 Marina and providing a high level of service to residents and visitors.

### **Janet Woodward: 2217 Lennoxville Road ( Beaufort, NC)**

Ms. Woodward addressed the Board regarding pedestrian safety concerns along Lennoxville Road. She noted continued residential growth in the area and stated the roadway serves a significant and expanding number of homes, with additional development anticipated. Ms. Woodward advocated for the construction of sidewalks to improve safety for school children, pedestrians, cyclists, and other recreational users. She expressed concern that increasing traffic and development will further impact safety conditions and referenced prior discussions with the North Carolina Department of Transportation regarding sidewalk installation on the state-maintained road. Ms. Woodward urged the Board to take proactive action, including consideration of a resolution to the State, emphasizing the need to address safety concerns before accidents occur. She concluded by requesting the Town's support in advancing sidewalk planning efforts for Lennoxville Road.

### **New Business**

1. Case #26-01 Preliminary: Final Plat - 110 Davis Bay Drive

Planning Director, Kyle Garner, presented Case #26-01, a request for combined preliminary and final plat approval for property located at 110 Davis Bay Drive. Mr. Garner explained that, although the proposal would typically qualify as a minor subdivision under other ordinances, the Town of Beaufort does not include a minor subdivision provision; therefore, all non-exempt subdivisions must be reviewed by the Board as major

subdivisions. Mr. Garner stated the request would divide a 10.1-acre tract into two parcels consisting of approximately 4.95 acres and 5.06 acres. He noted the property is zoned R-20, contains one existing single-family residence, is located within the Town's extraterritorial jurisdiction, and is designated as rural/working land in the Land Use Plan. The site is served by existing private streets, includes Environmental Health review for septic service, and requires no infrastructure bonding. Mr. Garner presented location maps and an aerial image of the property and reported the Planning Board reviewed the request at its January meeting and recommended approval unanimously.

Commissioner Spiegler requested clarification regarding simultaneous preliminary and final plat review.

Mr. Garner confirmed the combined review was permitted because no infrastructure improvements were required.

Commissioner LoPiccolo noted the request was procedural in nature and met all Town requirements.

Commissioner LoPiccolo made a motion to approve Case #26-01, including both the preliminary and final plat for 110 Davis Bay Drive.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

2. Case #26-02 Subdivision: Preliminary & Final Plat-153 Kelly Drive

Michelle Eitner presented Case #26-02, a request to subdivide one property into two lots through a combined preliminary and final plat review. She explained that, similar to the previous case, no infrastructure improvements were proposed; therefore, both plats were being considered simultaneously. Ms. Eitner stated the proposal included an engineered septic system for the newly created lot. Tract A contains an existing residence, while Tract B would be created as vacant land intended for development with a single-family home. The property is zoned R-20, with approximately five acres proposed for one tract and 2.35 acres for the other. She presented maps identifying the property location near the intersection of Live Oak Street and the Beaufort Bypass on Kelly Drive and noted the parcel is an already established lot. Ms. Eitner reported that the Planning Board had reviewed the application and unanimously recommended approval.

Commissioner Matthews requested clarification regarding language in Item 40 referencing a potential tabling of the recommendation.

Ms. Eitner explained the language reflected available options for Board consideration and reiterated the Planning Board's unanimous recommendation for approval.

Commissioner Matthews inquired about whether a formal notification process exists to inform the Town when a plat is recorded, referencing a prior situation in which a plat was not recorded within the required timeframe.

Ms. Eitner explained that the Town is not automatically notified when plats are recorded and typically becomes aware through communication with surveyors or applicants. She noted that in this instance the lot had previously been created by deed, and staff informed the property owner that the subdivision was required to proceed through the formal review process after an earlier recording deadline was missed.

Town Manager, Matt Zapp, provided additional context, confirming there is no automatic notification from Carteret County to municipal jurisdictions when plats are recorded. He stated that, based on ongoing communication with the property owner, he anticipated the plat would be recorded promptly within the required 60-day timeframe. He further noted the circumstances surrounding this case were rare and resulted from a procedural misstep following an assignment.

Commissioner Gillikin asked whether there were any concerns related to road access and whether the road serving the property was private.

Ms. Eitner confirmed the road is private and explained that Note 9 on the plat outlines fire and rescue access requirements, which would be evaluated when a building permit application is submitted for development of Tract B.

Commissioner Gilligan moved to approve Case #26-02, Preliminary and Final Plat, as presented.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

3. Capital Project BA #3- USDA Stormwater and Streets Improvements & FY26 BA #4

Finance Director, Christi Wood, presented two budget amendments related to the Town's paving project. She reminded the Board that the matter had been discussed during the Board of Commissioners annual retreat, where the Board expressed its desire to appropriate \$2,600,000 from General Fund fund balance to support edge-to-edge paving of streets impacted by USDA infrastructure projects.

Ms. Wood outlined the financial structure of the project, stating the total paving cost is estimated at \$4,680,000, consisting of \$2,080,000 in USDA funding and a Town match of \$2,600,000. She noted the Board had previously directed staff to move forward with obtaining bids for the paving work and to consider the potential sale of Town-owned property to partially replenish the one-time use of fund balance. Ms. Wood explained the technical components of the amendments. Budget Amendment No. 3 transfers funds from the General Fund to the USDA stormwater project fund, while Budget Amendment No. 4 appropriates General Fund fund balance and transfers those funds into the project fund.

Commissioner Spiegler emphasized the importance of moving forward promptly, noting that smaller municipalities often experience delays in scheduling paving projects and that timely action would help prevent further delays.

Commissioner Gillikin clarified for the public that the Board intends to pursue options to replenish the General Fund following the appropriation, acknowledging that while the full amount may not be restored, replenishment remains the Board's goal.

The Board agreed to consider each budget amendment separately.

Commissioner Matthews made a motion to approve Budget Amendment No. 3 for the USDA stormwater project.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

Commissioner Cooper moved to approve FY 2026 Budget Amendment No. 4.

Commissioner LoPiccolo provided additional comments, explaining that the paving strategy allows the Town to move beyond patchwork repairs toward comprehensive edge-to-edge paving. He noted that many streets had experienced significant impacts from infrastructure work and emphasized the Board's intent to ensure repairs are completed properly to extend roadway longevity. He acknowledged ongoing roadway challenges and thanked residents for their patience as improvements move forward.

4. Volunteer Board Appointments

Mayor Harker reviewed the appointment process for advisory boards, noting vacancies for two in-town members on the Historic Preservation Commission (three-year terms) and three in-town members on the Planning Board (three-year terms). She explained the nomination and voting procedures to be followed.

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to open the floor for Planning Board nominations.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

The following nominations were made:

Commissioner Matthews nominated Randall Mann.

Commissioner Spiegler nominated Victor Fasolino.

Commissioner Gillikin nominated Cameron White.

Commissioner Cooper nominated George Stanziale.

Commissioner LoPiccolo nominated Will Barnett.

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to close the floor for nominations.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

Votes were cast as follows:

Victor Fasolino — 5 votes

George Stanziale — 5 votes

Cameron White — 3 votes

Randall Mann — 1 vote

Will Barnett — 1 vote

Based on the voting results, Mayor Harker declared that Victor Fasolino, George Stanziale, and Cameron White be appointed to serve three-year terms on the Planning Board.

Commissioner Gillikin made a motion to open the floor for Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) nominations.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

Commissioner LoPiccolo nominated Bradley Hedrick.

No other nominations were made.

Commissioner Gillikin made a motion to close the floor for nominations.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

Mayor Harker called for a vote related to the appointment of Bradley Hedrick to serve on the HPC for a three-year term.

The Board unanimously voted (5-0) in favor of Mr. Hedrick's appointment.

The Board noted one HPC position would need to be re-advertised.

## 5. 2026 Parking Season

Town Manager, Matt Zapp, presented recommended updates to the Town's parking program following discussions held during the recent Board of Commissioners annual retreat. The proposed changes included establishing a uniform paid parking season from May 1 through October 1, providing one free parking pass per residential household located within the Beaufort Town limits, implementing a flat parking rate of \$3.00 per hour across all parking spaces including Front Street and premium lots, and updating parking signage to create a more user-friendly system.

Commissioner Spiegler thanked Mr. Zapp and staff for presenting thorough information at the retreat and acknowledged their work reviewing parking rates and analyzing program performance from the previous year.

Commissioner LoPiccolo requested clarification regarding eligibility for the residential parking pass, specifically whether the pass would be tied to water billing accounts and limited to residents within Town limits.

Mr. Zapp confirmed that eligibility would apply only to properties located within Town limits and identified as paying Town property taxes.

Mayor Harker further clarified that residents living in apartment complexes within Town limits would also qualify, as the property owners pay Town property taxes, and individual residents would receive passes.

Mr. Zapp confirmed this interpretation.

Commissioner Gillikin made a motion to approve the parking program adjustments for the 2026 season as presented, including establishing a paid parking season from May 1 through October 1; providing each Beaufort residential household with a three-hour free parking pass tied to property tax residency, including residents in multi-unit complexes; implementing a flat rate of \$3.00 per hour across all parking spaces and lots; and updating parking signage.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

6. "Rock the Docks" Concert Series 2026

Jen Welborn, Community Engagement Director, presented a special event permit application for the Town of Beaufort to host the Rock the Docks concert series. She explained that the event had previously been organized by the Beaufort Business Association; however, following the organization's decision to discontinue hosting the event last year, the Town proposed assuming responsibility for coordinating and operating the series. Ms. Welborn outlined the event as a free, family-friendly live music series consisting of twelve performances scheduled on Thursdays from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., beginning May 21 and continuing through August 6. The concerts would be held at John Newton Park and the adjacent western parking lot and would feature a variety of musical genres. She explained the event is intended to encourage takeout dining and increase patronage of local businesses before and after performances. Ms. Welborn reported that Dock House Restaurant had committed a \$5,000 sponsorship to support the program, matching the estimated event budget, which would fund a minimum of twelve performances at approximately \$400 per show. Staff would continue seeking additional sponsorships to support larger musical acts. She displayed a sample promotional flyer and noted that the event proposal had received internal approval from the Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works, and Administration.

Ms. Welborn requested approval for alcohol consumption within a designated, partitioned area of John Newton Park to be operated by Dock House Restaurant and monitored by police personnel. She also requested approval to utilize the western parking lot for staging and event activities, with designated areas for golf cart parking and a separate family-friendly space where alcohol would not be permitted.

Commissioner Cooper asked about enforcement of the no-alcohol family area.

Ms. Welborn confirmed police staffing would be present to monitor the event.

Commissioner Gillikin expressed appreciation for staff's efforts to revive the event and welcomed Dock House Restaurant's sponsorship and community involvement.

Commissioner Spiegler echoed support for the event and inquired about potential shade options for attendees.

Ms. Welborn responded that staff were still coordinating logistical details and may utilize the Town's event tent.

Commissioner LoPiccolo thanked Ms. Welborn for bringing the event back and noted community interest following its absence the previous year. He asked about parking lot logistics and timing for closing the lot to transition to golf cart parking.

Ms. Welborn explained the transition would occur during the afternoon, approximately between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., allowing the lot to remain available during peak daytime hours while accommodating event needs.

Commissioner Cooper asked whether closing the parking lot for the entire day would reduce confusion and prevent vehicles from remaining in the lot during setup.

Ms. Welborn stated staff preferred not to close the lot all day due to its importance as prime downtown parking during busy summer Thursdays.

Mr. Zapp added that Pivot Parking technology would allow staff to implement an electronic cutoff preventing additional parking payments after a designated time, thereby managing traffic flow while maintaining maximum parking availability for downtown businesses. He noted staff would coordinate with Police and Pivot Parking to ensure proper signage and flexibility during peak periods.

Mayor Harker thanked the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for its work in reestablishing the event and asked about plans for additional trash receptacles to accommodate increased food activity.

Ms. Welborn confirmed additional receptacles would be provided and that staff were continuing to finalize operational details.

Mayor Harker emphasized the importance of maintaining cleanliness and preventing litter from entering nearby waterways.

Commissioner Matthews made a motion to approve the Rock the Docks special event permit as presented, including approval of an alcohol waiver for John Newton Park and closure of the western parking lot during designated event times.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

## **Manager Report**

Town Manager Matt Zapp thanked the Board of Commissioners, staff, and facilitation team for what he described as a productive strategic retreat held January 29–30 at the Beaufort Hotel. He reported that the retreat resulted in the development of strategic goals and identification of the Town's top priorities. While noting that all identified initiatives are important, he emphasized completion of the USDA infrastructure projects and associated paving work before the end of 2026 as a primary focus. Mr. Zapp explained that the addition of approximately 21,000 linear feet of waterline work transferred from the Town's primary contractor to TA Loving and Company may extend portions of construction into spring 2027; however, he stated that the paving and USDA-related work remain critical priorities for the community.

Mr. Zapp provided an update on Turner Street construction, noting that despite losing approximately one week of progress due to a significant winter storm, the street was targeted to reopen temporarily by February 14 in advance of Mardi Gras festivities. He explained that the reopening would be temporary, as final asphalt and roadway surfaces had not yet been completed. Additional work will require the street to close again for installation of remaining infrastructure, placement and compaction of ABC stone base, and application of approximately 2.5 inches of asphalt. He added that installation of the decorative crosswalk will require concrete repouring and curing time prior to installation of brick pavers, extending construction by approximately seven days. The goal remains to complete the work in March ahead of the peak visitor season beginning early to mid-April.

Mr. Zapp announced that the Town's Mardi Gras celebration is scheduled for February 21, with vendor applications continuing to be accepted through the Beaufort Business Association. He also noted that the Beaufort Historic Sites Mardi Gras Ball scheduled for February 20 had been canceled.

Mr. Zapp again expressed appreciation to Fire Chief Tony Ray for his dedicated service and reported that more than 100 applications had been received for the Fire Chief position. Interviews were underway, and an announcement was anticipated in March.

Additional updates included participation in a New Business Panel hosted by the Small Business Center at Carteret Community College on February 17, the release of a new "Beaufort Minute" segment highlighting the Beaufort Community Foundation and opportunities associated with its 501(c)(3) status, and progress on installation of the Town's fuel farm. Mr. Zapp reported that despite weather-related delays, the fuel farm project remains on schedule for completion in April 2026.

### **Mayor/Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Matthews thanked all individuals who applied to serve on the Town's volunteer boards and encouraged those not selected to remain engaged and continue participating in Town initiatives.

Commissioner LoPiccolo reflected on the recent Board of Commissioners retreat, noting it was successful and expressing appreciation to everyone involved in its planning and facilitation. He also thanked Fire Chief Tony Ray for his service and dedication to the Town during his tenure.

Commissioner Cooper thanked Town staff for their efforts and responsiveness during the recent winter storm.

Commissioner Gillikin expressed appreciation for the community's patience with ongoing road construction, acknowledging social media commentary surrounding the projects while encouraging residents to maintain a positive perspective and drive more cautiously. She specifically raised concerns regarding Cedar Street between Turner Street and the former Grayden Paul Bridge, requesting consideration of reducing the speed limit from 35 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour due to speeding traffic, GPS-related confusion at the dead end, nearby hotel and marina activity, and pedestrian safety considerations. She added that slowing down allows greater appreciation of the community and expressed optimism about the long-term benefits of the infrastructure improvements despite temporary inconveniences.

Commissioner Spiegler thanked those attending both in person and online and commented on the recent snowfall, describing it as historic and beautiful. Although accustomed to snow events from living outside North Carolina, she noted appreciation for how long the snow remained and for the community slowing down during the storm.

Mayor Harker concluded by thanking Town staff for their work and dedication in keeping Beaufort safe during the winter storm.

### **Closed Session**

1. Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to enter closed session at 7:05 PM, pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3).

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

Following closed session, no formal action was taken by the Board of Commissioners.

## **Adjourn**

Commissioner Gillikin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM.

The motion carried unanimously with a (5-0) vote.

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Sharon E. Harker, Mayor

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Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk