



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Board of Commissioners Work Session Meeting
4:00 PM Tuesday, May 28, 2024
Train Depot, 614 Broad Street

Call To Order

Mayor Harker called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk, called the roll.

PRESENT:

Mayor Harker
Mayor Pro Tem Cooper
Commissioner Gillikin
Commissioner LoPiccolo
Commissioner Oliver
Commissioner Spiegler

ABSENT: None

Agenda Approval

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Presentations

1. Students from East Carteret High School (ECHS) Environmental Club provided a presentation on data collected from several storm drains in Beaufort. They shared information on "Adopt a Drain" and shared how they partnered with students in the National Art Honor Society to help raise awareness on stormwater and plastics. Students, teachers and agency who supported these efforts were recognized and expressed a desire to continue working with the Town of Beaufort to decrease plastic in the waterways.

The Board of Commissioners all thanked the students for their efforts in removing trash, collecting data and raising awareness of plastic and other pollutants in the local storm drains. There was a consensus from the Board to continue supporting ECHS by contributing supplies to their future projects and promoting information on the Town's website.

Items for Review and Discussion

1. Fountainworks- Results of Harbor & Waterways Charrette

Warren Miller with Fountainworks presented the detailed results of the Harbor and Waterways Public Charrette that took place on May 6, 2024. This information was included in the agenda packet and is posted on the Town's website for review.

Mayor Harker spoke on the purpose of the charrette and thanked those who participated.

The Board asked several follow up questions and commended Fountainworks on the work put forth to facilitate the meetings and online survey.

2. FY 2025 Budget

Todd Clark, Town Manager, provided a recap of the budget work sessions up to date. He noted the Board ended the last meeting with a discussion on stormwater fees for the upcoming year, but no consensus was established.

Greg Meshaw, Town Engineer, presented several alternatives regarding a method for determining appropriate stormwater fees. He discussed why the stormwater enterprise fund was necessary and how much revenue was needed for it to sustain. He shared revenue need assumptions, noting that USDA annual payments, annual operations, and potential Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) would come out of that fund.

After much discussion amongst the Board and consideration of Mr. Meshaw's proposed Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual and other alternatives, the consensus was to keep the flat rate approach by setting the residential rate to \$5 per month and the non-residential rate to \$10 a month, and to continue collecting the fee by parcel via the Carteret County Tax Bill. The Board also reached a consensus to offer the ability for property owners to apply for low-income credits, which would reduce the fee by 50%. It was recommended that funds related to the CIP be accounted for through grants rather than revenue collected through the stormwater fees, and noted these projects should be put on hold until grant money was secured. The Board expressed the importance of educating the community on the change in the fee structure; public notice avenues were discussed.

While Mr. Meshaw was commended on the creation of the Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual, the Board recommended it not be implemented at this time but may be revisited in the future. It was agreed there are stormwater issues in Town, and it would be an ongoing expense for years to come.

Christi Wood, Finance Director, discussed the proposed FY 2025 Fee Schedule. She noted the changes from the current year and explained the reasoning behind those recommended numbers.

The Board asked several questions, but no action was taken to adjust the proposed fee schedule. It was suggested a future water and sewer rate fee study would be beneficial in addition to the system development fee study in the upcoming year. Mr. Clark noted he would begin gathering quotes for those studies.

Other items discussed included directing staff to investigate the cost of constructing a dog park, to be included in a future budget, with the recommended location of the dog park considered through the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Advisory Committee. There was also a consensus to continue funding the Mayor's Conservation Program in the proposed FY 2025 Budget.

Mr. Clark noted the budget public hearing was scheduled for the Board's June Regular Meeting: June 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Project Updates

Mr. Clark provided updates on several projects going on throughout Town. Some items discussed were street resurfacing projects, UDO update key meeting dates, economic strategic planning for the Main Street Program, and upcoming policy development. He shared a map referencing property recently acquired from NC DOT at the end of West Beaufort Road.

Closed Session

1. Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) and NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4)

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to enter closed session, pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) and NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4).

The motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Commissioner Gillikin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Sharon E. Harker, Mayor

Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk