

APPROVED 3/8/2021

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BEAUFORT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
VIRTUAL WORK SESSION
JANUARY 25, 2021
4:00 P.M.**

The Town of Beaufort Board of Commissioners met for a Virtual Work Session on Monday, January 25, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Everette Newton presiding
Mayor Pro Tempore Charles McDonald
Commissioner Ann Carter
Commissioner John Hagle
Commissioner Sharon Harker
Commissioner Marianna Hollinshed

Others Present: Town Manager John Day and Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Manager Allen Coleman (All other staff members will be identified appropriately below)

Mayor Newton asked Allen Coleman to open the meeting to the public and provide public comment instructions.

Mayor Newton called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and asked Commissioners to accept a roll call.
Roll Call ensued.

Due to public health concerns and the restrictions on public gatherings, the Town Board of Commissioners conducted a Virtual Work Session on Monday, January 25, 2021. Members of the Board of Commissioners participated in the meeting remotely.

[PUBLIC COMMENT]

None

[PROJECT UPDATES]

The Mayor and Board received updates on current and/or active projects ongoing throughout the Town.

Greg Meshaw, Town Engineer, presented the following PowerPoint presentation:

Slide #1

Project Updates



Town of Beaufort
January 25, 2021

Slide #2

Active Projects

13 Active Projects

- 2 Parks & Recreation
 - 1 Makeovers
 - 1 New
- 4 Street and Pedestrian Improvements
- 5 Utility
 - 1 Water
 - 2 Sewer
 - 1 Water & Sewer
 - 1 Water, Sewer, and Stormwater
- 1 Stormwater
- 1 Building

Slide #3

Active Projects

(1 through 7)

- Cedar Street Park
- Topsail Park
- FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction
- Turner Street 100 Block Pedestrian Improvements
- Town Wide Sidewalks (Part 5-FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction)
- Cedar Street Water & Sewer Rehabilitation & Replacements
- Campen Road Waterline Extension/Upgrade

Slide #4

Active Projects

(1 through 7)

- Cedar Street Park
- Topsail Park
- FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction
- Turner Street 100 Block Pedestrian Improvements
- Town Wide Sidewalks (Part 5-FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction)
- Cedar Street Water & Sewer Rehabilitation & Replacements
- Campen Road Waterline Extension/Upgrade

Slide #5

Topsail Park



- Awaiting Plants
- 2 to 3 Week Completion

Slide #6



FY20 Street Rehabilitation and Construction

- ✓ Stanton Road
- ✓ Hedrick Street
- ✓ Mashburn Avenue
- ✓ Professional Park Drive
- ✓ Jefferson Street
- ✓ Eastern Avenue
- ✓ Ricks Avenue
- ✓ Sherwood Boulevard
- ✓ Live Oak Street 100 Block
- ✓ Gordon Street
- ✓ Laurel Lane
- ✓ Safrin Drive
- ✓ Craven Avenue
- ✓ Carteret Avenue
- ✓ Pollock Street
- ✓ Olivia Road
- ✓ Live Oak Street 300 Block
- ✓ Taylors Creek Road
- ✓ Campen Road

Slide #7



FY20 Street Rehabilitation and Construction

Concrete Work

- ✓ Replace 467 feet of rolled curb
 - Replace 82 feet of curb & gutter
 - Replace 69 sq. yards of sidewalk
 - Replace 16 each concrete curb ramps
- } Jan 25th
thru
Feb 12th

Pavement Markings

- 75 feet of 4" wide white lines
 - 1,078 feet of 4" wide yellow lines
 - 387 feet of 24" wide crosswalk lines
- } Week of Jan
25th

Seal Coating

- Marsh Street, Broad to Mulberry

Slide #8

FY20 Street Rehabilitation and Construction

New Street Construction

- ✓ Howard Jr. Lane



Slide #9 FY20 Street Rehabilitation and Construction

Orange Street

- Remaining Work
 - Complete storm sewer
 - Test & disinfect water line
 - Switchover water services
 - “Test” gravity sewer



Slide #10 FY20 Street Rehabilitation and Construction

Orange Street

- Remaining Work
 - Complete storm sewer
 - Test & disinfect water line
 - Switchover water services
 - “Test” gravity sewer
 - Reconstruct street base
 - Construct permeable concrete parking lane
 - Place asphalt surface
- February 12th projected completion

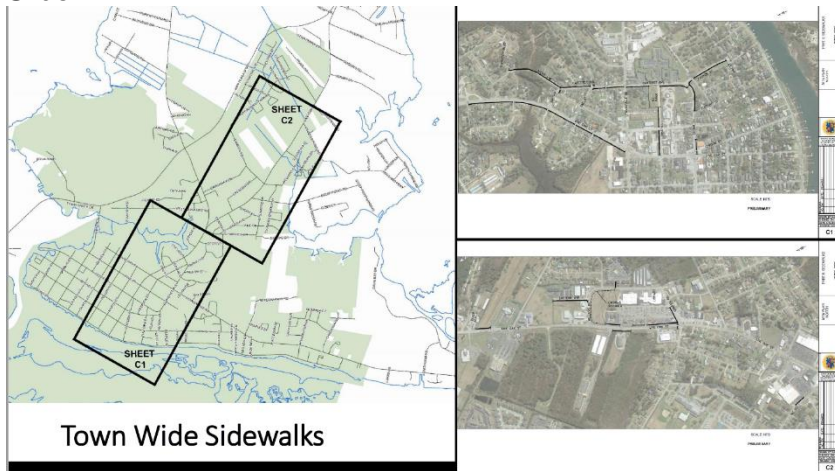


Slide #11 Turner Street 100 Block Street Improvements (West Side)

- Work Underway
 - Week of Jan 11th → Demolition
 - Week of Jan 18th → Duke Energy
 - Next → Relocate Water Service Lines
- Expanded Project
 - Approved Oct 12, 2020
 - Negotiating Change Orders



Slide #12



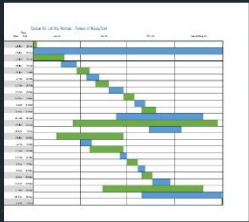

Slide #13



Town Wide Sidewalks

- Near-park segments first
- March 29th start (tentative)

Slide #14

Cedar Street Utility Rehabilitation & Replacements

- Work Underway
 - January 11th construction start
- May 3rd Completion (Schedule)
 - ≈ 1 week behind

Slide #15

Active Projects

(8 through 13)

- USDA Funding Applications (Water, Sewer & Stormwater)
- Wastewater Asset Inventory Assessment
- High-Rate Infiltration System Permit Requisition
- Electric Vehicle Charging
- Meeting Street Drainage Improvements
- Town Hall Reception Area Renovation

Slide #16

Active Projects

(8 through 13)

- USDA Funding Applications (Water, Sewer & Stormwater)
- Wastewater Asset Inventory Assessment
- High-Rate Infiltration System Permit Requisition
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station
- Meeting Street Drainage Improvements
- Town Hall Reception Area Renovation

Slide #17

USDA Funding Applications (Water, Sewer & Stormwater)

Project Estimates:

| | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Water..... | \$ 8.25 million |
| Sewer..... | \$11.70 million |
| Stormwater... | \$ 8.03 million |
| | \$27.98 million |

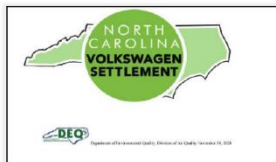
Proposed USDA loan/grant offer expected
 – January 25th goal missed

Slide #18

Electric Vehicle Charging

Potential Funding

- Phase 1 Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Infrastructure Program
- Application filed January 25th
 - \$10,000 grant towards \$24,800 cost



Slide #19



Slide #20

Town Hall

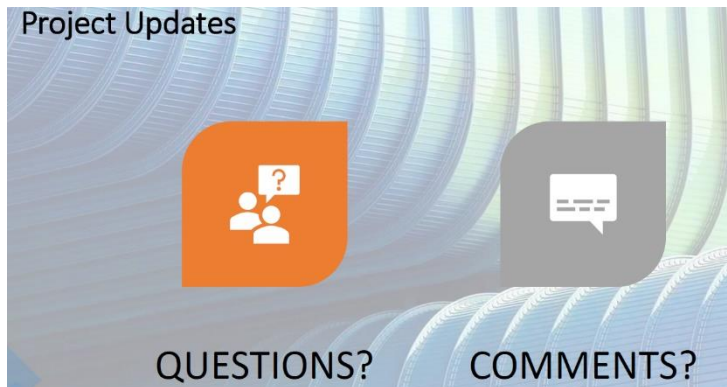
Steps, ADA Ramp & Sidewalks

Projected Completion
– January 29th
(Pending Handrail Delivery)



Slide #21

Project Updates



Commissioner Carter said she had been rethinking the charging stations item and since we have several in Town, that investment may not be worth tying up parking spaces when it's going to take four to eight hours at least to get a minimum charge on the car, especially downtown. She said from what she was hearing from people who use the charging stations, the cost was nowhere near twenty-five dollars, but rather four or five dollars.

Commissioner Harker asked if the three circled areas on the sidewalk slide were going to be addressed first.

Greg Meshaw said yes.

Commissioner Harker said Commissioner Carter may have a point when talking about the electric vehicles and it seems they've have received some additional information about who has those available. She said additional data would be helpful to review because even if the Town were awarded the higher end of the grant, it would still mean fourteen would be needed for the Town.

Commissioner Harker said the Board should investigate this item a little bit more before having staff go through the grant application process. She expressed appreciation to Greg Meshaw and said she really looked forward to receiving his report each month.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald asked if the project on Marsh street would cover the entire street at once or be phased in by blocks.

Greg Meshaw said they were completing the 300 block of Marsh Street and then all of the segments from Cedar Street to Mulberry Street.

Mayor Pro Team McDonald if that was all for Marsh Street.

Greg Meshaw said yes. He said it was seal coding and staff didn't think the street was so bad that it needed to be resurfaced. He said by using the seal coding, it would preserve the street and make it last longer, provided we fix some of the imperfections in the street that exist. He said when the work is completed it will look like newly paved street, but it'll actually be a sealer of sorts that seals the street and helps keep water from getting down into the street and causing other problems.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald said that's great to hear, but he was still concerned. He asked if there were future plans for Queen Street, Mulberry Street, and those streets north of Cedar Street.

Greg Meshaw said he didn't have the exact list of streets in front of him, but a number of those streets Commissioner McDonald mentioned was included in the USDA project that the Town hoped to receive grant funding for. He said he would confirm and send a list of those streets to the Commissioners tomorrow.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald asked if the grant didn't come through would we have to wait for 2-3 more years.

Greg Meshaw said it all depended on the money. He said after speaking with the USDA representatives he felt like the Town would receive a good offer in terms of grants, but that was certainly no guarantee.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald said he wanted to remind that the Board that everyone in Beaufort paid taxes and the focus should be applied to all of Board not just certain areas like Front Street and Ann Street. He said it behooved him that citizens did not come and speak out when they saw some areas being addressed more so than others.

Mayor Newton said if you looked at the areas that have been paved; it is across the entire community. He said similarly, if you look at the sidewalks that are going in, it is across the entire community and the Town was taking a holistic approach.

Mayor Newton said he wanted to thank the Commissioners for not bringing politics into the prioritization of these projects and for that he was very proud.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald said if Greg said it depends on money, and if the money runs out before these areas are addressed, how would we justify to that to the tax payers.

Mayor Newton said the Board unanimously agreed that they were not going to pave over roads that needed underground work. He said that was something the Board deliberated on and the same deliberation will go on in the next phase as we have to start digging up to fix the sewer lines, the water lines and the stormwater drains.

Mayor Newton said obviously money is the limit and the understanding was we've got 40 to 60 million dollars of requirements out there and the USDA grant will help. He said thanks to

Town staff we've increased the grant contributions dramatically. He said it wasn't 40 to 60 million dollars, but it sure was a great leap forward from six million.

John Day said the Town was still waiting to hear from the Rural Development Division of the USDA, and after we hear what the exact figures will be, then we can assess how we move forward from there. He said if there was not enough money to complete all projects as planned, then we could look at raising the money locally and they would be decision for the Board to consider at that time.

Commissioner Hollinshed said she was conscious of the charging stations downtown and that item was low on the priority list. She said she would prefer to see other projects pushed forward and emphasized rather than the charging station item.

Commissioner Hollinshed said people were walking to the new pharmacy beside Food Lion in Beaufort and asked if the sidewalk installation map could be reconfigured to include a sidewalk in that area, because it would be put to good use.

Commissioner Hagle expressed his appreciation to Greg Meshaw for his presentation, and said he also agreed with the other Commissioners comments on the charging stations. He said the private sector may quickly provide charging stations as the usage of electrical vehicles increases.

Commissioner Hagle said he appreciated all of the hard work, but felt there were better ways to spend the USDA money. He said he reflected on Commissioner McDonald's comments and agreed there were many moving parts on so many projects. He said it may be better to revisit the prioritization list and advertise the projects so that people throughout the community understand what is forthcoming.

Greg Meshaw said if the money pans out the way he hoped, a visual could be created to help illustrate all of the many projects and be a realistic resource.

Commissioner Hagle said he agreed with that approach and added the request wasn't immediate but additional materials should be created to help residents understand the work.

Greg Meshaw said as of now we have a good idea of how the USDA money will pan out and staff can work to develop a visual based on those allocations for a more appropriate and realistic visual.

Greg Meshaw said the EB charger item was returned to him this afternoon and he would begin working on the application, but it appears to be a consensus to forego that submission and the Board is not in a position to turn down any grant funds.

Mayor Newton said their does appear to be a consensus to not more forward.

Greg Meshaw said he would not submit the application.

Commissioner Harker asked why we were using something different on the three hundred block of Marsh Street verses the four and five hundred block of Marsh Street. She asked why the big difference in material and if that was saving time.

Greg Meshaw said the Board may recall an assessment study was completed by a consulting firm and they described the conditions of the street. He said that block of Marsh Street didn't rise to the same level as the other streets when it came to a need for paving. He said the assessment suggested that we try to preserve the street and by using a seal coding material on this block and that would allow for a test case scenario to see if this indeed preserved the street. He said based on other studies this material did indeed preserve the street and tend to lengthen the life of the street and quite frankly was a cheaper approach.

Commissioner Harker said her concern was that Marsh Street was a street that could be salvaged without having to worry about infrastructure the same as all the other streets that were part of the rehab project. She asked why this particular block of Marsh Street was selected as the test subject.

Greg Meshaw said this street did not have any major utility problems.

Commissioner Harker said none of them did. She said none of the streets that were paved had any infrastructure issues.

Greg Meshaw said Marsh Street did not have any infrastructure problems, but the numerical rating and staff observations of the street showed it to be in need of resurfacing as it could not be preserved and would not benefit from applying the seal coding.

Commissioner Harker said her concern was if the seal coding was used on these two streets, which happens to be a historically black community, are we going to run out of money to fix those streets if the seal coding doesn't work out correctly.

Greg Meshaw said the projections of when this street needed to be resurfaced is out a few years. He said the seal coding will help preserve the street and hopefully extend it even a few more years to try and save money along the way.

[ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION]

1. Minutes

In accordance with 153A-42 of the General Statutes, the Governing Board has the legal duty to approve all minutes that are entered into the official journal of the Board's proceedings. The following draft minutes were submitted by the Deputy Town Clerk, Rachel Johnson.

January 11, 2021 – Virtual Board of Commissioners (BOC) Regular meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hagle to include the January 11, 2021 Virtual Board of Commissioners (BOC) Regular Meeting minutes as part of the February 8, 2021 BOC Regular Meeting Consent Agenda.

Mayor Newton call each Commissioner by name (roll call).

VOTE: UNANIMIOUS

2. Sewer Allocation Request 197 Rudolph Drive, Beaufort NC (Deerfield Shores Subdivision)

The Board considered the 480 gallons per day sewer allocation request.

Greg Meshaw, Town Engineer, presented the following information:

BACKGROUND:

Mr. Don Butler of 197 Rudolph Drive in the Deerfield Shores Subdivision has requested permission to connect to the Town-owned low pressure sewer collection system that exists in part of the subdivision. This parcel is not among the 30 properties which the Town accepted as customers upon transfer of the collection system by the Deerfield Shores Utility Company, Inc. to the Town. It is understood from the engineer-of-record for the work to redirect wastewater from the utility's treatment facility to the Town, that 197 Rudolph Drive is one of three parcels adjacent to the collection system that were sold with access to offsite septic tank systems. It is further understood from the engineer that the easements associated with these systems were set to expire upon availability of "public sewer." As such, service lines were extended to the three properties because their access to offsite septic tank systems was to expire once the Town took over the collection system. (See attached January 18th memorandum to Commissioner Carter for more details.) The request to connect to the Town's system infers a request for sewer allocation in the amount of 480 gallons per day to serve the 4-bedroom residence at the parcel. Staff recommends approval of this request given the circumstances surrounding the request, the existence of existing capacity at both the Deerfield pumping station and the Town's treatment plant, and receipt of the required fees from the requestor.

Commissioner Carter asked if there were any other lots out there that have similar agreements that we may not be aware of.

Greg Meshaw said not that he is aware of. He said there are two other vacant lots that had connections that were, supposedly prior offsite septic system service, and connections were then added to the work to make it so the sewer could be pumped to the Town.

Commissioner McDonald asked if the 480 gallons per day request was based on household size and if that is the standard amount per household.

Greg Meshaw said that is he estimated usage for the house that is requesting connection to the system. He said the rate is in the states regulations manual. He said you take the number of bedrooms and multiply them by the 120 gallons per day bedrooms. He said based on his experience the usage is typically less than the projected amount.

Greg Meshaw said the usage data is tracked and if a house is using less than the 480 gallons, they could reallocate the additional gallons to someone else.

Commissioner McDonald asked fifteen houses were using 480 gallons per day would be pump still operate efficiently.

Greg Meshaw said no, the pump would be inadequate to handle that amount of volume.

Greg Meshaw said the pumping system was designed based upon 15 extra houses over and above the 30 they picked up through the agreement with Deerfield Shores. He said those houses were projected to have only three bedrooms. He said if 15 houses connect and have four bedrooms the pump will be at capacity.

Commissioner Hagle said the capacity of the waste treatment plant had been discussed previously and hopefully the life of our plant could be extended.

Greg Meshaw said staff was working to get pump test at each of the pump stations. He said Donovan Willis is currently working to install those so we can have actual data to in conjunction with the allocation spreadsheet work toward recapturing some capacity within our system.

Commissioner Hagle said that was very important long term.

Mayor Newton asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

The Board unanimously agreed to include this item as part of the discussion and considerations portion of the February 8, 2021 Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

3. Case No. 20-13 Request for Special Use Permit for Accessory Dwelling Unit at 102 Carteret Avenue

The Board considered setting a quasi-judicial hearing date and discussing the special use permit request for accessory dwelling unit at 102 Carteret Avenue at that time.

Kate Allen, Town Planner, present the following information:

BACKGROUND:

William Bell, on behalf of property owner Steve Carroll, is requesting a Special Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit at 102 Carteret Ave. The Planning Board reviewed the request at its regular meeting January 19, 2021 and recommends placing a condition on the SUP (if approved) limiting the use to family members only.

Mayor Newton asked if the 24 hour waiting period for a public hearing was required or if the Board could proceed with discussion at that same meeting.

Arey Grady, Attorney, said the Board would need to follow the quasi-judicial hearing process and should be able to take action at the next meeting.

Mayor Newton asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

The Board unanimously agreed to include this item as part of public hearing portion of the February 8, 2021 Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

4. 21-01 Rezoning from TR to CS-MU 508 and 510 Cedar Street

The Board considered setting a public hearing date and discussing the rezoning request at that time.

Kyle Garner, Planning and Inspections Director, present the following information:

BACKGROUND:

These two lots were not included in the initial rezoning in 2019 however of late there has been a number of inquiries regarding these properties and if there zoning was mixed use like others along this corridor. In an effort to encourage the redevelopment of these properties Staff has submitted them for rezoning to the CS-MU. At the January 19, 2021 meeting the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval rezoning from TR to CS-MU.

Commissioner Hollinshed said she watched the Planning Board meeting and has a few questions and comments but will wait until the Public Hearing meeting to ask them.

Commissioner Hagle said he agreed with Commissioner Hollinshed and he would address his questions at the next meeting.

Mayor Newton asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

The Board unanimously agreed to include this item as part of public hearing portion of the February 8, 2021 Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

5. Paid Parking

The Board reviewed and discussed whether to reinstate paid parking (including applicable regulations) for the 2021 season.

John Day, Town Manager, presented the following information:

BACKGROUND:

The Board of Commissioners cancelled paid parking downtown in 2020 due to economic concerns related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Despite the Pandemic, sales and occupancy tax collections set new records. The Beaufort Development Association recently conducted a survey on paid parking downtown and has made a number of recommendations, which are attached. Also attached are the parking regulations from the 2019 parking season and the 2019 parking season summary presentation.

Parking Regulations – 2019 Season

Dates: May 18, 2020 (Monday before Memorial Day) - Sept. 7, 2020 (Memorial Day)

Hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Parking fee schedule:

- Front Street parking lots (East & West lot): escalating fee beginning at \$1/hour
- All other spaces: \$1/hour.
- Overtime/improper parking violation: \$20
- Handicap parking violation: \$100

- Violation fee late payment (after 30 days): \$30
- Weekly parking pass: \$25
- Monthly parking pass: \$100
- Seasonal parking pass: \$200
- WBD Resident Premium parking pass: \$800 (only available to Waterfront Business District Residents)

Fee-Parking space locations (includes golf cart-only spaces):

- On-street spaces on Front Street from Queen Street to Moore Street, 4 hour limit
- On-street spaces on Front Street from Live Oak to Queen Street, all-day
- Front Street parking lots (East and West), all-day with escalating rate
- Queen Street parking lot, all-day
- Craven Street parking lot, all-day
- 100 block of Turner Street, all-day
- 100 block of Craven Street to Middle Lane, all-day
- Pollock Street in front of Town Hall (6 spaces), 4 hour limit
- Golf cart spaces, 4 hour limit.

Manager Day said Susan Sanders from the Beaufort Development Association (BDA) was also available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Carter asked if the areas on Turner street were being considered part of paid parking or if the Board only wanted to do Front Street.

Manager Day said the recommendation was to return to the 2019 paid parking schedule.

Commissioner Carter asked if the plan was to return to the 8:00am to 5:00pm paid parking schedule.

Manager Day said yes.

Commissioner Carter said the original purpose of enforcing paid parking was to encourage turnover and the Town has certainly seen what happens if you do not have an enforcement plan. She said she does not favor paid parking but it works.

Commissioner Harker said she appreciated the survey results as it provided a lot of good information and insight. She said when paid parking was suspended it was quickly realized the turnover was not happening which created a problem for local business owners. She said she was also not a fan of paid parking, but the process seems to alleviate the turnover issue and keep local businesses thriving.

Commissioner Harker asked if the plan was to start the Monday before Memorial Day which would be May 23rd, 2021.

Manager Day said that decision was up to the Board and reminded Board members of an email they received from a BDA member who suggested maybe starting paid parking on July 4th, 2021. He said another suggestion which was creative was making the first hour free if the Board so chose to implement that discount.

Commissioner Carter said the idea of extending paid parking past Labor Day was an option that could be explored.

Commissioner Harker said the survey really didn't reveal when the program should start and in prior years they selected the Monday before Memorial Day. She said she liked the idea of the first hour free for publicity and if there was a way to track those results that would be something to talk about in the future. She said the concern of long, lengthy parking would still be an issue if the paid parking program wasn't implemented until July and turnover is important for the local business community.

Commissioner Carter said another suggestion would be to place a sign by the Beaufort House and say no ferry parking beyond this point. She said enforcement may be an issue but it was not just the Park Service ferries that parked there.

Commissioner Harker said the Board needed to decide on what they wanted to do with the west parking lot and if that area would be included in the paid parking section or if the Board wanted to continue with the same regulations as 2019.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald asked if the current COVID-19 restrictions would have any impact to the paid parking start date.

Manager Day said from a staff perspective, no. He said paid parking was cancelled last year to remove any kind of impediments that people might think up to coming downtown, and everyone saw the amount of people that came.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald asked when the survey was completed and if this question was part of the survey.

Manager Day said the survey was completed about 3 weeks ago in the middle of COVID-19.

Commissioner Hollinshed said she would suggest the Board consider doing a timed parking, omit the charges and increase the penalties but recognizes that process may be complicated to move forward. She said the borders to some extent are closed internationally and here in the United States so people may visit here rather than their other travel plans. She said her main suggestion would be the time element.

Commissioner Hagle said he reviewed the survey results and there was not a significant majority that favored paid parking. He said he did not consider the parts of uptown or other areas that really did not have impact by paid parking, but he was curious if extending the start past Memorial Day would have a major impact. He said turnover was the merchants major concern and that item received a high percentage while paid parking did not which was kind of an interesting phenomena. He said he would support the 2019 schedule but consider delaying the start date while keeping the end date at Labor Day weekend.

Commissioner Hagle asked if Susan Sanders could address some of the parking survey results. He said he supported paid parking because it was beneficial to the businesses in parts of our Town but if local businesses did not feel paid parking benefited them the Board should listen and try to accommodate the best they can.

Mayor Newton said it is not so much about paid parking as it is parking management.

Susan Sanders said none of us like paid parking but what was experienced last year was so painful to watch and a system was needed to discourage people from occupying the limited parking spots we have available. She said after analyzing the results you will notice the downtown business owners were overwhelmingly in favor of paid parking while the managers and employees were not. She said this may have some effect on the percentages.

Susan Sanders said the one-hour free paid parking discount was an interesting twist and could potentially do wonders for the local business folks that just want to run in somewhere and pick something quick. She said it was discouraging to pay to park just to grab a quick meal or pickup an item.

Mayor Newton asked Manager Day how the free hour would work.

Manager Day said staff had been in contact with the parking company and the parking kiosks can be programmed to handle the free hour parking setting.

Mayor Newton asked what the annual commitment was for paid parking. He said his understanding was seventy-five thousand and that included the leasing of the kiosks and other components.

Manager Day said he didn't have that figure right in front of him but that figure sounded in the neighborhood of what the fixed costs were going to be whether they chose to hire a parking manager or not. He reminded the Board that currently the parking manager position is vacant.

Commissioner Carter said the Town has hired a fulltime parking supervisor in the past and questioned whether the position is needed for 12 months when parking is only a hot item for three to four months out of the year.

Manager Day said the duties can not be fully absorbed by an existing position but he could look into some alternatives to reduce the need for a 12 month manager position.

Commissioner Carter said that would help.

Commissioner Carter said the Town may consider not buying anymore of these particular meters but maybe find ones that are less costly and user friendly.

Susan Sanders said that even with the COVID19 virus the traffic last year was a huge indicator that the Town business owners were not affected.

Mayor Newton said if the Commissioners would like he would setup for John Lampros to attend the February 8, 2021 regular meeting to receive an additional perspective. He said he had spoken to Mr. Lampos and he had very interesting insight.

Commissioner Hagle said to remind the Board members and the public that paid parking and the applicable rules, etc. can be modified as we go along and it is not something that is permanent.

Commissioner Hollinshed said the Board cancelled paid parking because of a hurricane in the past.

Mayor Newton said that was correct. He said that was the value of having this process with staff verses a contractor.

6. Lions Club 5k Bridge Run

The Board considered approving the Lions Club 5k Bridge Run.

Rachel Johnson, Parks/Events Coordinator and Public Information Officer, presented the following information:

BACKGROUND:

The Lions Club event organizer David Daly has submitted an application to garner approval to move forward with making plans for the 2021 event. The event requires procuring permissions from NCDOT.

The request is for the race route to be closed off on Saturday, Nov. 6 during the event as well as Middle Lane for the finish line. The event is anticipated to be complete and everything reopened by 9 a.m.

The applicant is aware that due to COVID-19 Pandemic this event may not be possible in the manner presented and that as the fall approaches, the Board would need to reevaluate the event to see if it is able to proceed.

They are seeking preliminary approval to begin moving forward.

Commissioner Carter asked if the road closure would be the entire bridge or just one lane.

Rachel Johnson said no. She said the Lions Club wants to keep the same route they've had for the past two years which is closing the middle lane only.

Mayor Newton asked if that was just the middle lane right off front street.

Rachel Johnson said yes.

Commissioner Harker asked if the dog walk was part of their race last year.

Rachel Johnson said David Daly was also available to answer any questions, but he could not remember if the dog walk was held last year due to COVID19.

Commissioner Harker asked if the route was the same as 2019 which included a U-turn around Turner Street then come back the same way down the same way.

Rachel Johnson said yes that was correct.

Commissioner Harker asked for route specific clarification and if police presence was something being considered to help participants cross the roads safely.

David Daily said the dog strut was held in 2019 and 2020 and the route began at the starting line where the five K begins and there was a turnaround at the end of the Turner Street Bridge. He said only the one lane would be used and it was fun for the runners to run in between the dogs as they crossed the finish line.

Commissioner Hagle asked if the Board could proceed with giving approval now so the Lions Club could begin working on their planning.

Mayor Newton asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hagle to approve the Lions Club 5k Bridge Run as presented.

Mayor Newton call each Commissioner by name (roll call).

VOTE: UNANIMIOUS

7. Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy

The Board considered approving a Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy for the Town of Beaufort Employees.

Christi Wood, Finance Director, presented the following information:

BACKGROUND:

The proposed Beaufort Emergency Paid Sick Leave (BEPSL) policy is a proactive step to protect town employees in the absence of the extension of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which expired on December 31, 2020.

This policy provides eligible employees with temporary emergency paid sick leave similar to that found in the FFCRA. The BEPSL policy is independent of the Town's existing sick leave policy.

Staff recommends this policy in the context of peak COVID-19 infection rates, hospitalizations, and deaths. The slow roll-out of vaccines suggests that significant improvement and the approach of "normalcy" may not materialize until this fall or even the end of 2021.

Board approval is requested as this policy is considered a change in employee benefits.

The policy has been reviewed by the Town Attorney.

Commissioner Carter asked if this policy covered employees who were already working from home. She asked if the policy covered parents who's schools had been closed off and on the entire time. She asked how many times an employee can use the emergency sick leave.

Christi Wood said the policy allows for 80 hours of regular pay and is set to expire on June 30, 2021. She said the effective date of the policy would be February 1st, 2021.

Christi Wood said the policy would allow parents to use the time if they were at home with their children because of virtual school or daycare/childcare not being available to them.

Commissioner Carter said eighty hours was two full weeks in addition to an employees sick leave.

Manager Day said none of the Town employees have utilized this policy when it was available through the CARES Act.

Manager Day said most employees are working at their regular job sites because they are either police, fire, or public works.

Commissioner Carter asked what about employees who were working from home.

Manager Day said this policy was primarily designed to deal with what happens to you if you have to get tested or have to be quarantined. He said no employee is working from home five days a week regularly and every employee must submit their time.

Commissioner Harker asked this policy was for employees who experienced COVID related symptoms.

Manager Day said that was correct. He said the Town was following guidelines provided by the CDC and the State Department of Health and Human Services with regard to employees.

Commissioner Harker asked if a child's school was closed due to COVID related symptoms would an employee be able to use this policy.

Manager Day said yes.

Manager Day said there was discussion in Washington about renewing the CARES Act which would eliminate this policy but in the interim staff thought it would be better to have something in place.

Commissioner Harker asked if the Town would be responsible for awarding the 80 hours and not individual employees sick leave.

Manager Day said yes.

Commissioner Harker said the concern was around it being an elective and this policy should only be allowed if employees fit specific criteria.

Christi Wood said an application is required to seek the emergency paid sick leave and employees would have to meet all six criteria.

Commissioner Harker said she understood the application process but was curious if we were requiring any type of documentation from the health care providers when an employee has to self-quarantine.

Christi Wood said no.

Manager Day said staff currently receives the tests results.

Commissioner McDonald asked if an employee would be able to share this sick leave with other employees.

Christi Wood said employees can share regular sick leave but not the emergency paid sick leave.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald asked if an employee had a broken leg and was out of sick leave could another employee donate their sick leave to assist.

Christi Wood said yes, but that was different from the emergency paid sick leave here.

Manager Day said every employee will have access to the 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave. He said if an employee was particularly ill and exceeded that amount and they had no sick leave of their own, they could then request additional donations from others.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked how the verification process would work if the individual who was ill was not an immediate family member.

Manager Day said if an employee needs to take time off to assist a family that was allowed under our normal sick leave policy.

Commissioner Hollinshed said she would ask for a little clarification on that item because of the checklist bullets references caring for a grandparent, but what if it was a neighbor.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked if employees were encouraged to receive the vaccine.

Manager Day said yes, all employees have been encouraged to receive the shot when it is available to them.

Commissioner Hagle said additional clarification is needed on who is eligible to receive the paid sick leave and for it to not be too complex. He said hopefully it will be short term deal, but he would recommend this policy be consistent with the current sick leave policy.

Mayor Newton asked the Board how they would like to proceed.

The Board unanimously agreed to include this item as part of the items for discussion and consideration at the February 8, 2021 Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

8. December Financial Report

The Board received the December 2020 financial report and discussed any questions.

Christi Wood, Finance Director, presented the following item:

BACKGROUND:

- Tax collections for November and December are listed below

| November | | |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Tax Year | Balance Remaining | Collection Rate to Date |
| 2014 | \$2,871 | 99.89% |
| 2015 | \$7,913 | 99.69% |
| 2016 | \$19,081 | 99.28% |
| 2017 | \$23,111 | 99.21% |
| 2018 | \$30,662 | 99.06% |
| 2019 | \$72,984 | 98.10% |
| 2020 | \$2,723,163 | 43.21% |
| December | | |
| Tax Year | Balance Remaining | Collection Rate to Date |
| 2014 | \$2,542 | 99.90% |
| 2015 | \$7,868 | 99.69% |
| 2016 | \$18,889 | 99.28% |
| 2017 | \$22,579 | 99.23% |
| 2018 | \$30,303 | 99.07% |
| 2019 | \$69,748 | 98.19% |
| 2020 | \$937,898 | 80.42% |

- Sales and Use tax distribution for January is \$162,919 (November sales)

Commissioner Carter asked why the Town was anticipating less income from the antenna contract revenue than in the past. She asked if they had reduced the amount of time or usage.

Christi Wood said there had not been changes that she was aware, but it could be a timing incident. She said she would research and report back to the Board.

Commissioner Hagle asked if there were any revenue trends that the Board should be concerned about.

Christi Wood said nothing to be concerned with at this time. She said the Board approved several projects that were costly, and they would require change orders.

Commissioner Hagle asked if the Sales and Use tax distribution from the County would continue to decrease.

Christi Wood said that figure was the amount remaining and staff currently anticipated collections to continue.

9. Approval to Move Forward with AFG Grant request

The Board received a request for approval of the AFG grant for an SCBA air refilling station.

Tony Ray, Fire Chief, presented the following information:

BACKGROUND:

The Fire Department requests approval to move forward on a AFG grant for an SCBA air-refilling-station to be placed at the fire station. The grant would be for \$59,106.85 with a local match of 5% plus administration fee of 2% (Total \$4138.47). This grant would not be awarded until next fiscal year.

Chief Ray said the local match should be \$4,141.65 and not the amount previously provided.

Commissioner Carter asked for further clarification.

Chief Ray said this grant application would alter the budget for next year.

Commissioner Carter asked for further explanation of the equipment.

Chief Ray said the grant was for SCBA, which was a self-contained breathing tank the fire fighters will wear. He said this was a refilling station they would be able to refill their bottles at.

Chief Ray said the current system is about 20 years old and was purchased in 2003.

Chief Ray said the grant request was through FEMA.

Commissioner Carter asked if the fixed unit would be installed at the fire station.

Chief Ray said yes, the grant included a compressor as well. He said the QVC filter takes out viruses and things before refilling the bottles and it requires less space.

Commissioner Harker said she was pleased with the proposal and appreciated the chief researching. She said she wished him much success in the grant award and four thousand dollars out of fifty thousand dollar grant was worth it.

Commissioner Harker asked if there were any concerns if the grant award was unsuccessful.

Chief Ray said they would continue with business as usual. He said parts for the compressor has become onerous.

Commissioner Harker said we do have a five year budget as we look out, but hoped the grant would work out this time.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald said this certainly sounded like a nice piece of necessary equipment and he hoped the grant would be awarded.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked if this piece of equipment would help those individuals in Beaufort who were currently using oxygen tanks.

Chief Ray said no, that was not correct.

Chief Ray said this was not oxygen. He said this filters the ambient air we breathe which is compressed air that goes into the bottles they use.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked if this was similar to the oxygen tanks people could receive from medical companies.

Chief Ray said no.

Commissioner Hagle asked if the new unit is acquired would the old one be scrapped.

Chief Ray said yes, it would be retired.

Chief Ray said if the new unit was received the Town would sell the old air compressor unit and the truck.

Commissioner Hagle said good.

[MAYOR/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS]

Commissioner Carter asked if an update could be provided on the Z-Smith rentals because we should be running out of time.

Christi Wood said it was a three year grant and we are currently in year two.

Commissioner Carter asked for confirmation since it seemed longer than that.

Christi Wood said the grant award followed the fiscal year schedule, but notification of the grant could have been sent and discussed earlier. She said the grant award started in July of 2019.

Commissioner Carter said it seems like it was longer than two years.

Christi Wood said the application process started about six months prior to the actual award.

Commissioner Harker said welcome to the family, Allen, you're doing a great job.

Mayor Pro Tempore McDonald said no comments at this time.

Commissioner Hollinshed said welcome aboard Allen. She said the street renovation project, otherwise known as the big dig was moving along fairly well on Orange Street and she wanted to thank staff for overseeing this much needed work.

Commissioner Hagle said thanks to Greg and others that have been involved in making the street crosswalks at Cedar Street and all the other streets a success. He said thanks to Susan for parking survey and it was good to see all of the input from the local business community.

Commissioner Hagle said the safety message for the evening was for everyone to focus on their driving because it is easy to get distracted.

[ADJOURN]

A motion was made by Commissioner Hagle to adjourn the meeting.
Mayor Newton called the roll.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Everette "Rett" Newton
Mayor

Allen Coleman
Town Clerk