



## **Town of Beaufort, NC**

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### **Town of Beaufort Board of Commissioners Work Session Meeting 4:00 PM Monday, December 20, 2021 - Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic Minutes**

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#### **Call To Order**

Mayor Harker called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

#### **Roll Call**

Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk, called the roll.

#### **PRESENT:**

Mayor Harker  
Mayor Pro-Tem Hagle  
Commissioner Cooper  
Commissioner Hollinshed  
Commissioner Oliver  
Commissioner Terwilliger

#### **Agenda Approval**

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

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hagle, Commissioner Cooper, Commissioner Hollinshed, Commissioner Oliver, Commissioner Terwilliger

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Public Comment**

There was none.

#### **Project Updates**

Greg Meshaw, Town Engineer, discussed the status of current projects; a summary of the presentation is included below.

- 15 Active Projects
  - 1 Parks & Recreation

- 5 Street and Pedestrian Improvements
- 6 Utility (5 Sewer, 1 Water & Sewer)
- 1 Stormwater
- 2 Building
- Active Projects- Detail
  - Cedar Street Park
  - FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction
  - Turner Street 100 Block Pedestrian Improvements
  - Town Wide Sidewalks (Part 5- FY20 Street Rehabilitation & Construction)
  - Downtown Parking
  - Turner Street- Broad Street Traffic Calming Improvements
  - USDA Funded Utility Project (Water, Sewer & Stormwater)
  - Wastewater Asset Inventory Assessment
  - High-Rate Infiltration System Permit Reacquisition
  - ECHS Sewer Pumping Issue Investigation
  - Wastewater Design Unit Flow Reduction Request
  - PruittHealth Sewer Service Construction
  - Meeting Street Drainage Improvements
  - Fire Station No. 2 Renovation
  - Train Depot Ceiling Repair/Painting
- USDA- Funded Utility Project (Water, Sewer & Stormwater)
  - 25% Design Meeting w/ Consultant
  - 3-day meeting
  - Direction provided by staff
  - Consultant had questions and requested “homework” for staff to complete over the next month
- Campen Road Water Line Extension Project Complete
  - Testing & disinfection complete
  - Connected
  - Pavement patching incomplete, ran out of asphalt, but almost done
  - Town staff sent certification papers to the State, still waiting on a reply
- Wastewater Design Unit Flow Reduction Request
  - Goal is to gain approval to use more accurate daily sewage flow design rate
  - Obtain from NC Department of Environmental Quality
  - Allocations of capacity become more realistic
  - The process includes assembled WWTP flowmeter calibration records, documented past infiltration and inflow studies and corrective actions, and compiled daily WWTP influent flow records from 2018 to present
  - Other factors considered, determine number of sewer customers: month-by-month basis, residential vs. non-residential
  - Looking at heavier users of water
    - Calculations and results include: 281 GPD/Residential Equivalent Unit; RFU = 3 Bedroom Unit; 93.7 gallons per bedroom
  - Next step is to formalize the findings and request and send it to NCDEQ
- Wastewater Asset Inventory Assessment has been completed and the draft report has been compiled; the final report is expected to be back to Town staff soon after the first of the year. The plan has to be adopted by the board in order to receive final reimbursement for the work done by the consultant.
- Turner Street- Broad Street, Traffic Calming Improvements
  - Plans complete
  - Still need county permission for driveway realignment and bid the project out
- Train Depot Ceiling Repair/Painting
  - Peeling paint and swollen slat boards need to be addressed
  - Staff has preformed work in the attic, where the problem originated
  - HVAC ductwork resting on joists and attic insulation
  - Moisture-soaked insulation, no circulation under ductwork
  - Staff fixed the ductwork so it was not laying on the joists, they also dried and replaced moisture laden insulation

- Staff wants to obtain bids, schedule a contractor to do the work, monitor the attic through early summer and paint/repair in the summer months

Mr. Meshaw said he was happy to answer any questions or receive comments regarding the project updates.

Commissioner Oliver asked for clarification regarding the 93.7 gallons per day finding and how infiltration effects that number, looking at areas for potentially more relief.

Mr. Meshaw said that number includes infiltration, he added that they have examined water records and current records of flow to the wastewater treatment plant, which has infiltration built into it. He suggested he might be a good idea to look at it again after the USDA project is complete.

Commissioner Oliver asked how much of the 93.7 could be lowered by infiltration in our system.

Mr. Meshaw said he has not seen where any real extensive flow monitoring of this particular system had been done over the years; what has typically been conducted is several instantaneous flow type monitoring throughout certain parts of the system. He suggested however, that his past experience has shown lining to have been beneficial.

Commissioner Cooper asked where the 6.6 million came from for the pumping stations.

Mr. Meshaw said nothing has been scheduled, and the board would have to approve the projects as part of the budgeting and planning process, through adoption of a capital improvement plan that pulled the projects into the long-term budget plan. He said as time went on, he would like to look at funding that is applicable to these projects; such as USDA funds, state revolving loan funds if available, or initiatives released by the federal government. He suggested to complete these future projects, it would probably require outside and Town fundings. He reminded the group that this was a 10-year-plan, and there were many factors that contributed to the ability to be able to carry out the projects.

Commissioner Cooper asked about the sewage flow rate and how that study effects the citizens of Beaufort in terms of new construction and current residential properties.

Mr. Meshaw said it was the bulk of what was being built around Town; he explained how sewer capacity would be allocated in a residential sub-division using the proposed rate versus current numbers and the amount of water it would save.

Commissioner Cooper asked if there was any staff who were experienced enough to do the painting at the Train Depot.

Mr. Meshaw said it would be discussed internally and pointed out that staff does do a lot of office remodeling work.

Commissioner Cooper suggested it would save money if Town staff did the work, rather than contracting the job out to another company.

Mr. Meshaw pointed out it was a historic building, but they would look at staff doing the work.

Commissioner Terwilliger followed up with a question regarding the wastewater design guidelines, by asking Mr. Meshaw if the recommendation was 93.7 gallons versus 120 gallons.

Mr. Meshaw confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Terwilliger asked if he thought studying it longer would be more beneficial in the long-run.

Mr. Meshaw said as long as the infiltration existed, they would not get any more credit; it is about how much shows up at the wastewater treatment plant, which factors into the calculations. He said as far as waiting goes, this could be reassessed again after the USDA project was completed, roughly three years from now. He said he did not think it was a matter of additional study, rather than additional action to precipitate changed conditions, that will achieve a better result...overall he suggested sufficient information had been complied.

Commissioner Terwilliger asked about the status of the rapid infiltration permit.

Mr. Meshaw said there was progress, said they were in a transition mode from preliminary engineering to real design and permitting work. He said this was being done by a consultant and he just received a scope of work from them last week; upon adequate review, they will move forward with authorizing the next step in the project.

Commissioner Hollinshed said in anticipation of receiving some stimulus money for the pump station repairs, would that be taken into consideration when considering the inventory report.

Mr. Meshaw said yes, right now they are targeting that money to a station that is not on the asset inventory recommendation list because it is already part of the capital improvement plan. He said this was wastewater station #7 and it would be a rather large expense, somewhere around \$750,000 as an estimate.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked who was assisting Mr. Meshaw with this other than immediate staff.

Mr. Meshaw said that a lot of the heavy lifting had been done by finance staff regarding past usage, billing and gallons used per household. He said utilities staff had also helped in the process of gathering this data, as well as himself.

Commissioner Hagle brought up the point of older lift stations being considered a confined space; they are a hazard that must be managed quite diligently. He asked if those seven older stations were estimated to be in the same cost range as the \$750,000 for station #7.

Mr. Meshaw said he did not have the numbers in front of him but estimated that the ones of Front Street would be more expensive, particularly the one at the end of Turner; he added that all of those stations are 50 years or older.

Commissioner Hagle asked about the infiltration pond and if the State might come around to the idea.

Mr. Meshaw said they had been in conversation recently regarding regulatory buffers, and so far, the discussions have gone well. He did add that he believed the regulators look at these types of systems more than they did in the early years, because there have been a few in the western part of the State that failed. He said that the systems on the coast have a greater potential to be more successful because of the sandy soils found in the area.

Commissioner Hagle asked if improvements to infiltration are made in the future, will he be able to go back to the State and request a lower rate?

Mr. Meshaw said a year's worth of inflow to the wastewater treatment plant is needed to back up the request; if the work is successful, the numbers will show it through the flow rates.

## **Items for Discussion and Consideration**

### **1. Returning to In-Person Meetings**

Mayor Harker shared current COVID numbers in Carteret County and initiated discussion on the topic of returning to in-person meetings.

The consensus of the Commissioners was to keep the virtual meetings in place until the hybrid option becomes available, to ensure the safety of the citizens. The board members also suggested additional safety measures may need to be in place even after returning to the Train Depot. The topic will be assessed and discussed again at the next meeting.

### **2. 806 Cedar St Mixed Use - Site Plan**

Kyle Garner, Planning Director, requested the item be placed on the consent agenda for the January 10, 2022 Regular Meeting. He added this item had previously been approved two years ago but recently expired; the applicant re-submitted and there were no changes to the past approved plan.

Mayor Harker asked if there were any questions for Mr. Garner.

Commissioner Oliver asked for an explanation of how stormwater was addressed on a small parcel like the one mentioned.

Mr. Garner said they look at it as part of the original Cedar Street Mixed Use, and for the State, usually when development happens in a commercial setting a stormwater plan must be assembled and engineered. He said in this particular case, the property was less than 8,000 square feet, even with the lot next door, it is close to the same, making it under 20,000 square feet. He added the Town was looking to put in stormwater chambers and basins along Cedar Street as part of that project, as the area is becoming more commercialized, and some type of stormwater system will be needed. He suggested this is why the State has been involved, and the chambers are included as almost bioretention areas, so absorb some of the stormwater.

Commissioner Oliver asked if this was being offered to the applicant as part of the consideration of how stormwater is being handled on this particular lot.

Mr. Garner said absolutely, as well as anyone along the Cedar Street Mixed Use area.

Commissioner Cooper confirmed that the plans indicated two-stories, with the lower end being business and the upper story being residential. He asked if it would be considered a rental?

Mr. Garner said it was his understanding it would be a long-term rental.

Mayor Harker asked if there were any more questions, if not was there a consensus to place this item on the consent agenda?

The board unanimously agreed to place it on the consent agenda.

3. Rezone 2158 Live Oak Street totaling 0.579 acres from R-20 to B-1

Mr. Garner asked that this item be placed as part of a public hearing for the January 10, 2022 meeting; He explained it was a rezoning as well as a CAMA Map Amendment to the current map.

Mayor Harker asked if there were any questions; there were none.

The consensus of the board was to place the item as a public hearing.

4. Minutes- July 26, Aug. 17 and Sept. 27, 2021

The consensus of the board was to place this item on the consent agenda.

5. Minutes- November 22, 2021

The consensus of the board was to place this item on the consent agenda.

6. Financial Notes

Christi Wood, Finance Director, discussed the November financial report, tax balances report for October and November, and sales & use tax distribution for the month of September sales, which totaled \$205,781. She said she was happy to answer any questions about the report.

Commissioner Oliver requested to spend some time, about an hour or so, with Ms. Wood to go over the report more in depth. He said he hoped this would address his questions and help him do a deep dive on the six-month report, which is more of a customary business review. He also brought up the audit report deadline of October 31, 2021 to the LGC; he said there was a 30-day grace period and asked if a waiver was required beyond that period. He also asked when the best expectation was for the audit report to be presented to the board.

Ms. Wood said the audit contract was amended by the manager, and it was being finalized. She said the audit report would be presented to the board in January or February.

Commissioner Oliver asked if the Town was required to have any kind of permission from the LGC beyond their guidance.

Ms. Wood said when the audit contract is amended, it must be submitted to the LGC; so yes, they are aware of it.

Commissioner Oliver confirmed that the contract amendment would be asking for their permission.

Ms. Wood said that was correct.

Commissioner Cooper said he would also like to sit down with the Finance Director and ask some questions, as well as each department head, to better understand how they represent the Town.

Commissioner Terwilliger said he would also like to sit down with Ms. Wood to go through the financial side of things. He too said he would like to meet with all the department heads at some point, mainly to become familiar with what they do.

Commissioner Hollinshed said she could use a refresher as well, and it would be good to sit down with department heads as well but suggested waiting for the new Town Manager to be part of the process.

Commissioner Hagle agreed and said he hoped to get a better financial reporting system in place, suggesting the current report has too much detail and is hard to understand.

Mayor Harker agreed meeting with staff was important, especially with a new board, and suggested scheduling time after the new Town Manager begins on January 4, 2022.

### **Mayor/Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Oliver said it would be very helpful to sit down with Ms. Wood and he would follow-up to schedule a time with her; he suggested the main goal was to get education on the present financial system. He suggested giving the new manager time to get settled before asking him for recommendations; he suggested it might be better to divide those two meetings up but believes they are both important.

Commissioner Cooper agreed it would be great to get these meetings set-up with staff to become more informed about what was going on around Town. He thanked those staff members who spoke on items earlier in the meeting.

Commissioner Terwilliger wished his fellow commissioners, the mayor and all those in attendance, a safe and happy holiday and said he was looking forward to working everybody as they moved forward into 2022.

Commissioner Hollinshed said there was a lot of work on their plates and looked forward to working through it in the upcoming year; she also wished everyone a safe and Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Hagle also wished everyone happy holidays and a Merry Christmas. He particularly thanked the staff for all the hard work they completed over the past year. He said it was great to be working with the new board and spoke on how important their new ideas and initiatives were moving forward. He ended by asking people to help others when possible and reminded everyone to focus on their driving during the holidays.

Mayor Harker said she remembered being a new commissioner and how that felt, even though her situation was different as she was surrounded by seasoned members. She said she appreciated the fact the new members were looking to enhance their knowledge and be more vocal on the board. She reminded the group that the new Town Manager starts on January 4, 2022 and touched on the importance of education, in terms of the required ethics training class. She ended by wishing everyone a happy and joyous holiday.

### **Adjourn**

Commissioner Hagle made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hagle, Commissioner Cooper, Commissioner Hollinshed, Commissioner Oliver, Commissioner Terwilliger

The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM

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Sharon Harker, Mayor

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Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk