

CAROLINA BEACH

Town Council Regular Meeting

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 - 6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, followed by the invocation by Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte and Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Mayor Lynn Barbee
Mayor Pro Tem Deb LeCompte
Council Member Jay Healy
Council Member Wayne Rouse
Council Member Vince Losito

ALSO PRESENT

Town Manager Bruce Oakley
Deputy Town Manager Ed Parvin
Finance Director Debbie Hall
Town Clerk Kim Ward
Town Attorney Noel Fox

ADOPT THE AGENDA

Mayor Barbee said item 13 will be removed from the agenda and moved to next month's meeting.

ACTION: Motion to approve the agenda, less item 13 being removed

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Set Public Hearing for August 11 to Discuss the Financing for 9 Boardwalk Properties
2. Set a Public Hearing for August 11 to Consider a Zoning Map Amendment and Text Amendment to Article 3 of the UDO to Rezone 204 Cape Fear Boulevard, 206-217 Cape Fear Boulevard, and 3 South Third Street from Mixed Use (MX) to a New Zoning District Called Commercial Transition (CT)
Applicant: Town of Carolina Beach
3. Set a Public Hearing for August 11 to Consider a Text Amendment to Articles 3 and 7 of the UDO to Add Dog Grooming to the Home Occupation Ordinance
Applicant: Zoey Brass

4. Resolution to Apply for LGC Financing Approval
5. Resolution Supporting WAVE Transit's Grant Application for Transit-Oriented Development Planning
6. Appoint Honorary Board of Adjustment Member
7. Resolution Retiring Police Canine Demi
8. Budget Amendments/Transfers FY26
9. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

ACTION: Motion to approve the consent agenda

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

10. Events Update

Mr. Parvin reviewed upcoming events:

- Carolina Beach Market – continues every Saturday through October 3 at Lake Park
- Boardwalk Blast Fireworks/Music – continues every Thursday (exception is Friday, September 4, the final date) at the Gazebo
- Movies at the Lake – continues every Sunday through September 6 at Lake Park
- Life Rolls On – surf event on July 25 on the Boardwalk beach strand and skate event on July 26 at Mike Chappell Park Skate Park
- Whomporama – August 22 at Hamlet Avenue beach access

11. Presentation by Island Arts Council

Barb Buckley, Chair of Island Arts Council, gave a presentation about two proposed projects for collaboration with the Town. Beth Carter, Treasurer of Island Arts Council, was also present.

Project 1: Mosaic Totems

Ms. Buckley described an island-wide, art-enhancing community involvement totem pole project. She explained that each cluster of three posts would be positioned on public property, and she identified the proposed Town locations as the municipal docks, Lake Park, and the Fire Station. Ms. Buckley said a similar installation is already being developed for Kure Beach, with the first cluster planned for the area near Ocean Front Park, likely in August. She detailed the concept, which involves clusters of three mosaic totem posts – two designed by artists and one created by the community – through public workshops.

Council Member Rouse asked whether there would be a theme for the totems. Ms. Buckley said themes would be relevant to the location where each cluster is installed. She used the example of the Kure Beach installation, which features a turtle motif reflective of the beach environment.

Ms. Buckley explained that Island Arts Council would finance the cost of the posts, tools, and supplies through a grant already received from the New Hanover Community Endowment in combination with The Arts Council of Wilmington & New Hanover County, supplemented by the organization's general budget as needed. Island Arts Council would manage the project and ongoing maintenance, including repairing any loose tiles after installation. The group is asking the Town for approval of site placements, logistical support, assistance ensuring safety and aesthetic quality, staff manpower for installation and ground maintenance, and use of the Rec Center for community workshops. She said upon installation, ownership and liability for the totems would transfer to the Town. Ms. Buckley also mentioned the possibility of place markers explaining the theme and artist history as well as the potential for an unveiling event for each installation.

Mayor Barbee asked if three posts would be installed in a single cluster at one location or spread individually across different spots. Ms. Buckley confirmed that each group of three posts would be installed as a cluster at a single location, with varied heights creating a visual balance. She said Council would be able to review and approve the designs.

Council Member Rouse asked about the timeline. Ms. Buckley said they are hoping to do all three installations in 2026 but might have to run into 2027.

Council Member Losito asked if the totems would be at ground level. Ms. Buckley explained that the PVC posts would be set into the ground 2-3 feet and extend about 4 feet up, with an interior stake anchoring them for stability.

Council Member Healy said he loves the idea and expressed that he would welcome even more installations in the future, suggesting that businesses might eventually be invited to participate with direction from Island Arts Council.

Mayor Barbee asked Mr. Oakley whether staff would be able to support the installation work on public property and assist in finding suitable locations. Mr. Oakley said the request seemed minimal and manageable.

Mayor Barbee raised the question of content approval, noting that the Town had maintained a similar process with the mural program, not formally approving the artistic content per se but retaining a final review to ensure nothing offensive or politically charged was displayed. Mr. Oakley agreed, suggesting the same approach could be applied here, with staff authorized to review content and flag any concerns to Council. Ms. Buckley confirmed that Island Arts Council's internal committee would review and select artist renderings for each site before presenting them to the Town suggested handling this via email.

Council Member Rouse raised the additional point that he would like any motion to explicitly limit placement to public property and asked Community Development Director Jeremy Hardison whether placement on private property could implicate the sign ordinance. Mr. Hardison confirmed that if a totem depicted something being sold, it could potentially be classified as a sign under the sign ordinance if on private property. Mayor Barbee clarified that was not what Island Arts Council was proposing,

Project 2: Light Post Flags

Ms. Buckley also presented details about a seasonal flag program for the Town's light posts, similar to a program already in place in Southport. She noted that she had been inspired upon seeing the Town's existing surfer-themed banner flags. Ms. Buckley said the proposal would involve 20 flags for the first round, selected from an open call to artists, with Island Arts Council vetting the designs before bringing them to Council. She added that the flags would be displayed seasonally – spring and fall – and would be paired with an annual community event called Island Celebration of the Arts to coincide with the flag installations.

Ms. Buckley noted Island Arts Council had already applied for a grant with this project in mind due to upcoming grant deadlines and that without the grant the project might not proceed. She said the total estimated outlay is approximately \$9,000, with the grant covering about half and Island Arts Council matching the remainder. Ms. Buckley indicated that the organization would know whether the grant was awarded by the end of August. She said when flags are retired, the proposal is for them to be auctioned to the community, with 50% of proceeds going to the artist and 50% to Island Arts Council to fund future iterations of the program.

Mayor Barbee asked Mr. Oakley for his thoughts on installation logistics. Mr. Oakley noted that the Town had just ordered a new set of surfer-themed flags for locations around Town and that he would need to consult with staff on how frequently flags are currently changed and what investment had already been made. He noted the Town does swap them out for Christmas and other occasions and committed to reporting back to Council on the timing.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte noted that the newer surfer/sunrise flags are currently located near the bridge entry into Town and suggested focusing the artist flags in the downtown area where they would receive the most visibility. Mr. Oakley agreed that a specific location could be identified for the program.

ACTION: Motion to approve the two projects as presented by Island Arts Council; the totems and signs would be on public property, staff would do installation, and staff is authorized to review basic content and bring any concerns to Council

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

12. Manager's Update

Mr. Oakley gave an update on various projects:

- Canal Drive/Cape Fear Boulevard corridor: The Town had hoped to have permanent bollards in place at the Canal Drive and Cape Fear Boulevard location, but the ordering and procurement process has taken longer than anticipated. Staff has been working with the engineer on a proposal for a permanent design and will update Council further as information becomes available.

- Saint Joseph Street multi-use path: This project is scheduled to go out to bid on October 7, barring any objections or complications from the N.C. Department of Transportation (DOT).
- Lake Park bridge and demo bathroom: Bathroom demolition will need to wait until approximately January and the bridge replacement until after the summer season. Crews have encountered numerous water lines in the area that must be traced and mapped before any demolition work can proceed.
- August workshop: Staff will present ideas for holiday events.
- Infrastructure projects
 - Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI): The contract is being finalized, and installation should be underway in September. This will result in significant cost savings for Town.

Council Member Healy inquired about the status of the DOT stoplight on Lake Park Boulevard. Mr. Oakley said final details are being worked out.

Council Member Healy also asked about the Welcome to Carolina Beach sign. Mr. Oakley said the Town is waiting on the encroachment agreement from DOT and then the manufacturing of the sign.

Mayor Barbee asked if there is an update about the closing of SeaWitch. Mr. Hardison said the developer intends to use the end of the summer season to begin site preparation and permitting for the new development, with a final operating date for the current SeaWitch building anticipated in October. He said the plan involves constructing the new SeaWitch on the opposite side of the street, with the goal of having that facility open by the following summer season. Mr. Hardison said the hotel component of the project will take considerably longer to complete.

Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte noted that the original plan had been to keep the current SeaWitch open until the new building was completed and asked whether something had changed. Mr. Hardison explained that the developer needs the current site as a laydown yard in order to begin hotel foundation construction, which necessitates closing the existing building earlier than originally planned.

Mr. Parvin noted that the developer estimates approximately 8-10 months to complete the east side pavilion building and 18-20 months for the larger west side hotel. He said the new SeaWitch is anticipated to open around June.

Council Member Rouse shared a written statement he had been asked to convey to residents on behalf of Harmony Hospitality from representative Zachary Brigman. It summarized the details already discussed.

Mayor Barbee mentioned the recent accident at the intersection of Dow Road/Lake Park Boulevard/Risley Road, stating there were concerns from nearby businesses. He acknowledged the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) had reviewed the intersection in the past. Mr. Oakley said the Town could reach out to WMPO again. Council Member Healy suggested a dedicated pole instead of a stoplight for the access road. Mayor Barbee confirmed that Council gave consensus for the Town to ask WMPO to review the intersection again for any possible safety improvements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Lassiter of 1320 Bonito Lane shared concerns stemming from activity by a builder constructing houses behind her property. She stated that she has been directly affected both personally and with respect to her property. Ms. Lassiter specifically raised the issue of several trees she believes are posed to fall on her house. She also recounted an incident in which bulldozers entered her front yard without prior notification. Ms. Lassiter's broader recommendation to Council was that residents be notified in advance when permitted construction activity is likely to affect adjacent properties. She said there may be some conflict of interest explaining why her emails have gone unanswered and reiterated that residents need to be kept informed without having to attend Council meetings to find out what is happening.

Robert Rosak of Rosak's Towing arrived too late to sign up for public comment, but Council permitted him to speak. He stated that he has been attempting to get his towing company added to the Police Department's rotation list for approximately two years, following the Town's amendment of its towing ordinance. Mr. Rosak indicated he has been unable to make progress, citing a denial letter received in the mail and an inability to reach officials with the Police Department and other staff members. He raised concerns about the accident that occurred at the previously discussed intersection, alleging that the towing company that responded left the towed vehicle in an unsecured parking lot on Winner Avenue for over 24 hours where occupants were able to access their belongings from the open vehicle, and he also said that towing company does not have current license plates on its vehicles yet remains on the Town's rotation list. Mr. Rosak stated that he meets all the Town's requirements and provided documentation that he said shows expired tags on the aforementioned tow company's vehicles. Mayor Barbee said it is important for staff to respond to inquiries.

PUBLIC HEARING

13. Text Amendment to Article 3 Section 3.19 of the UDO to Allow for Temporary Structures Beyond the Pierhead Line
Applicant: Noelle Holdings, LLC

This item was removed from the agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

14. Closed Session to Discuss a Real Estate Matter Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5)

ACTION: Motion to enter a closed session to discuss a real estate matter pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5)

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse, Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

Mayor Barbee called the meeting back to order and said Council took no action during closed session.

ACTION: Motion to cancel the July 28 workshop

Motion made by Mayor Barbee

Voting Yea: Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem LeCompte, Council Member Healy, Council Member Rouse,
Council Member Losito

Motion passed unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barbee adjourned the meeting at 7:10 PM.