

Board of Aldermen
Budget Work Session
Thursday, April 15, 2025
MINUTES

The Town of North Topsail Beach Board of Aldermen held a budget work session on April 15, 2025. A quorum of the board was present.

Board members present: Mayor Joann McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem Leonard, Aldermen Connie Pletl, Richard Grant, Mike Benson and Laura Olszewski.

Board members absent: None

Town Manager Alice Derian and Debra Mack, Director GWI Tax and Accounting were in attendance. A quorum of the Board was present.

Call to Order

Mayor McDermon called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Approval of the agenda

Alderman Benson motioned to approve the agenda; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Leonard, unanimously approved.

New Business

A. Review of daily revenue generated from parking

Manager Derian reviewed the daily revenue generated from parking.

Mayor McDermon questioned if there was any reason to change the split of the revenue between the General Fund and the Shoreline Protection Fund. After discussion, consensus was to leave it split as is.

Alderman Olszewski stated she originally asked for this information so she could do an analysis of the lowest revenue day to make it a free day for the public. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard said there are four county run lots that have free parking. Alderman Pletl asked if Alderman Olszewski is the only one interested in a free day for parking or if others are. A poll of board members resulted in only Alderman Olszewski having interest in offering a free day of parking with no change to the budget.

B. Finalize funding amount for Greater Topsail Island Chamber of Commerce - BOA agreement for a \$3,500 placeholder

Manager Derian said the Topsail Island Area Chamber of Commerce has requested the annual financial commitment of \$3,500. Last year's commitment was \$2,500. After discussion, consensus was \$2,000 would be the commitment amount.

C. Finalize funding amount for Ocean City Jazz Festival - BOA agreement for \$10,000 Placeholder

Manager Derian explained Ocean City requested \$10,000 funding for the Jazz Festival and that was included in the draft budget. \$10,000 was allocated last year. After discussion, consensus was to fund \$11,500.

D. Snowflakes - Confirmation of how many and consideration of additional

Manager Derian said the Town has 75 complete snowflakes and 15 that are being repaired and prepared as replacements. The electric company estimated another 23 poles might could be used for snowflakes but would need to take an inventory to be certain. After discussion, consensus was to add an additional \$5,000 to the holiday budget for additional decorations.

E. Follow up discussion on E check capabilities for financial software

Debra Mack, GWI, stated she will not have a quote for this until next week. Consensus was to have a placeholder amount.

F. Follow up discussion from Board of Aldermen on Salaries

Alderman Grant proposed 3% Cost of Living (COLA) and Merit (performance based) increase up to 5%. After discussion, consensus was 3% COLA and up to 5% merit.

G. Follow up discussion on policy implementation for training pay back

Manager Derian explained this is to get further feedback from the Board as to whether this is something for staff to pursue. After discussion, consensus was not to pursue a policy for training pay back.

H. Recap of Proposed draft FY 25-26 Budget/Additional information Received

Manager Derian stated she made one change in the proposed budget for a boom lift received through the Police Department LESO program by increasing the maintenance and repair line item in Public Works by \$6,000. She asked Board members if they had any changes to the proposed budget. Mayor Pro Tem Leonard said he wants to reduce the number of new police vehicle purchases from two to one with the one being purchased used to replace the one lost due to the mishap that occurred on March 30th. After discussion, consensus was to reduce the dollar amount for purchase of two new police vehicles to one vehicle and move the funds to the Contingency Fund.

I. Review of Fee Schedule

Manager Derian reviewed the items on the Fee Schedule relating to the garbage collection fees. She said the Board enacted a \$25 per year fee for a vacant lot in case clean up was needed after a natural disaster. She asked for feedback from the Board on whether to continue this fee as the Town would not go on private property to do a clean up. After discussion, consensus was reached to remove the vacant lot \$25 fee. Alderman Olszewski said she would like to know the revenue the Town received from the fee for leaving a garbage cart out after 10 am.

Manager Derian asked Board members if there was a desire to meet again tomorrow. Consensus was no.

Adjournment

Alderman Grant motioned to adjourn at 9:59 am; seconded by Alderman Olszewski; unanimously approved.

I certify that these are the official minutes of the Board of Aldermen adopted at its May 7, 2025, meeting.

*Nancy Avery
Interim Town Clerk*