



Board of Commissioners Agenda

Town of Swansboro

Tuesday, April 08, 2025

Revised 4/7/2025

Board Members

William Justice, Mayor | Jeffrey Conaway, Mayor Pro Tem | Pat Turner, Commissioner
Douglas Eckendorf, Commissioner | Joseph Brown, Commissioner | Tamara Pieratti, Commissioner

I. Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge

II. Public Comment

Citizens have an opportunity to address the Board for no more than three minutes per speaker regarding items listed on the agenda. There is a second opportunity at the end of the agenda for the public to address the Board on items not listed on the agenda.

III. Adoption of Agenda and Consent Items

The Town Clerk respectfully submits to the Board, the Regular Agenda and the below consent items, which are considered to be of general agreement and little or no controversy. These items may be voted on as a single group without Board discussion "or" if so desired, the Board may request to remove any item(s) from the consent agenda and placed for consideration separately.

III. Consent Items:

- [a.](#) Appointment of Members to Swansboro Fire Department Relief Fund Board
- [b.](#) Resolution 2025-R4 Requesting Special Election (added 4/7/2025)

IV. Appointments/Recognitions/Presentations

- a. **Oath of Office – Commissioner Tamara Pieratti**
- b. **Employee Introduction & Oath of Office**
Presenters: Dwayne Taylor – Police Chief and Mayor William Justice
- c. **Recognition of Parks & Rec Program Supervisor Sara Elliott**
Presenter: Anna Stanley – Parks & Recreation Director

V. Public Hearing

VI. Business Non-Consent

- [a.](#) **2nd Amendment/Weapon Allowance at Town Hall**
Presenter: Jon Barlow – Town Manager

Continued discussion focusing on the rights contained within the 2nd amendment to the US Constitution, pertaining to the allowance of weapons at Town Hall was requested by the Board.

Recommended Action: Review and discuss.

b. Visitor's Center Future Plan Discussion

Presenter: Jon Barlow – Town Manager

Discussion on the future plans for the Visitor's Center is needed.

Recommended Action: Review and discuss.

c. Future Agenda Topics

Presenter: Alissa Fender – Town Clerk

Future agenda items are shared for visibility and comment. In addition, an opportunity is provided for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas.

Recommended Action: Discuss and provide any guidance.

VII. Items Moved from Consent

VIII. Public Comment

Citizens have an opportunity to address the Board for no more than five minutes regarding items not listed on the Agenda.

IX. Manager's Comments

X. Board Comments

XI. Closed Session

- a. *Recommended Action: Motion to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged; and (5) to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease.*

XII. Adjournment



Board of Commissioners Meeting

Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Appointment of Members to Swansboro Fire Department Relief Fund Board**

Board Meeting Date: **April 8, 2025**

Prepared By: **Jacob Randall – Fire Chief**

Overview: The North Carolina State Firefighters Association (NCSFA) provides annual funding to support agency members across all North Carolina fire departments. To oversee the management of these funds, NCSFA has established rules outlining a five-member “relief fund board” for each agency.

The Fire Department has recognized the need to restructure or replace Trustees to the Firefighters Relief Fund Board. NCSFA defines how positions are appointed to ensure the membership is truly diverse and inclusive of the community. The Relief Fund Board consists of five positions. Trustee Seats 1 & 2 are selected by the Fire Department, Trustee Seats 3 & 4 are appointed by the Local Government, and Trustee Seat 5 is appointed by recommendation to the State Fire Marshal.

To comply with this process, the recommendation is to appoint the following interested parties to the Relief Fund Board Trustee Seats 3 & 4:

- Trustee Seat 3: Benny Whitley (Chairman)
- Trustee Seat 4: Sonia Johnson (Treasurer)

There is no term limit to this position, and the board roster is certified annually by the Fire Chief.

Background Attachment(s): None

Recommended Action:
Appoint Benny Whitley to Board Trustee Seat 3 and Sonia Johnson to Board Trustee Seat 4 of the Swansboro Fire Department Relief Fund Board.

Action: _____



**Town of Swansboro
Resolution 2025-R4**

Resolution Requesting Special Election November 4, 2025

WHEREAS William Justice was elected to serve the Town of Swansboro as Commissioner in November of 2023. He was sworn into office and selected to serve as Mayor Pro Tem in December 2023 with a four-year term to expire in 2027; and

WHEREAS Mayor Pro Tem William Justice resigned his seat effective February 11, 2025, when he was appointed by the Board of Commissioners to the vacant Mayor Seat; and

WHEREAS Tamara Pieratti was appointed by the Board of Commissioners to fill that vacancy on March 25, 2025 in accordance with NCGS 160A-63, which provides that the person appointed to fill the vacancy would serve until the next regularly-scheduled election, which is November 4, 2025, at which time an election would be held to fill the remainder of Mayor Pro Tem William Justice's original term.

WHEREAS the Board of Commissioners for the Town of Swansboro requests a Special Election for the November 4, 2025, ballot to fill Mayor Pro Tem William Justice's seat with a term to expire in 2027.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Swansboro hereby request a Special Election on November 4, 2025, to fill the seat vacated by Mayor Pro Tem William Justice on February 11, 2025.

ADOPTED this the ____ day of ____ 2025.

William Justice, Mayor

Attest:

Alissa Fender, Town Clerk



Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **2nd Amendment/Weapon Allowance at Town Hall**

Board Meeting Date: **April 8, 2025**

Prepared By: **Jon Barlow – Town Manager**

Overview: Continued discussion focusing on the rights contained within the 2nd amendment to the US Constitution, pertaining to the allowance of weapons at Town Hall was requested by the Board.

Extended Overview: Discussion was held by the board at its November 12, 2024 regular meeting. The discussion concluded with three actionable steps:

- Reviewing the signage for legal accuracy
- Exploring the installation of panic buttons for front office safety
- Gathering input from staff and the public about their preferences on the matter

Background Attachment(s):

1. Excerpt from November 12, 2024 Minutes
2. A summary of NC Firearms laws and municipal authority,
3. Swansboro Town Code 130.46 Carrying Concealed Handguns on Public Property

Recommended Action: Review and discuss.

Action: _____

2nd Amendment/Weapon Allowance at Town Hall

Manager Barlow reviewed that discussion was requested focusing on the rights contained within the 2nd amendment to the US Constitution, pertaining to the allowance of weapons at Town Hall was requested by the Board. It was noted that the town ordinance, specifically addresses concealed carry but does not explicitly prohibit open carry.

Commissioner Eckendorf expressed concerns about the "no weapons" sticker on the building, stating that it may give a false sense of security and could make the building a target.

Board members highlighted the importance of consulting staff, as they work in the building daily and should feel safe in their workplace. There was a consensus that the current sign may need to be revised for accuracy, in compliance with state laws.

Several board members and staff voiced varying perspectives on concealed carry for employees, with some advocating for training and support if employees wished to carry. Concerns about liability and public perception were also raised, with the legal counsel explaining that reasonable regulations, such as prohibiting or allowing weapons with appropriate measures, are legally permissible. The discussion also emphasized the need for practical safety measures, including installing panic buttons in the front office for staff to alert authorities in emergencies.

The discussion concluded with three actionable steps:

- Reviewing the signage for legal accuracy
- Exploring the installation of panic buttons for front office safety
- Gathering input from staff and the public about their preferences on the matter

Proposal to Establish a Funding Policy/Funding Request Application for Nonprofit Organizations

Manager Barlow reviewed that at its October 22, 2024, regular meeting, the Board directed staff to develop a funding policy/funding request application for nonprofit organizations. This policy aims to establish a clear and equitable framework for allocating resources to local nonprofits that provide essential services, align with the Town's priorities, and support community welfare.

In response to inquiries from the board Manager Barlow or Finance Director Johnson clarified the following:

- Nonprofits must demonstrate a significant presence or service to Swansboro residents, provide detailed information about their funding needs, and meet specific documentation requirements, including proof of nonprofit status and IRS tax forms.

U. S. Supreme Court, in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 55 U.S. 570 (2008) ruled that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to possess a firearm. The District's total ban on handguns violated the Second amendment. The Court also stated that the right to bear arms is not unlimited, and some gun restrictions are permissible.

NCGS 160A-189. Municipalities may by ordinance restrict discharge of firearms in the corporate limits and may regulate the display of firearms on streets or other public property.

NCGS 14-415.23. *Statewide Uniformity* (of regulations on concealed handguns). No local government may enact regulations concerning carrying a concealed handgun. A unit of local government may, however, "adopt an ordinance to permit the posting of a prohibition against carrying a concealed handgun, in accordance with GS 14-415.11(c), on local government buildings and their appurtenant premises. "

A local government may adopt an ordinance to prohibit, by posting, concealed carry on recreational facilities (generally described as enclosed facilities, gymnasiums, athletic fields, but only during scheduled events). Concealed carry may not be prohibited in outdoor, passive use areas like greenways.

There is an all-encompassing exception for licensed firearms kept in an enclosed, locked compartment in one's automobile.

NCGS 14-269.2. It is illegal to possess or carry a weapon on school campuses or other educational property, with exceptions noted, including the licensed firearm in a locked vehicle compartment exception.

NCGS 14-415.11 relates to concealed carry permits but provides that concealed carry permits do not authorize concealed carry in state or federal office buildings or in state or federal office located in other buildings.

NCGS 14-269.4 prohibits carrying or possessing a weapon on certain named State properties, and in courthouses, with exceptions, including the licensed firearm in locked vehicle compartment exception.

NCGS 14-277.2 prohibits weapons at parades, processions, picket lines, or demonstrations, with exceptions, including locked vehicle compartment exception.

NCGS 14-269.3 prohibits carrying a firearm in any assembly where an admission fee is charged, or in an establishment where alcoholic beverages are sold.

§ 130.46 CARRYING CONCEALED HANDGUNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY.

Item VI - a.

(A) The definitions set out in G.S. § 14-415.10 are hereby incorporated by reference.

(B) It shall be unlawful for any person to carry a concealed handgun in any local government building owned, leased or used by the town, upon any premises appurtenant to such buildings, or in any recreational facility owned, leased, used or operated by the town.

(C) The Town Manager or designee is hereby permitted to direct the posting of conspicuous notices or statements setting out the prohibition against carrying a concealed handgun upon any location described in division (B).

(D) If any part of this section shall be determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the determination shall not affect the remaining portion of this section which shall remain in full force and effect.

(OC, § 8-1-9) (Ord. passed 9-19-95; Am. Ord. 2013-O18, passed 11-19-13) Penalty, see § 130.99

Statutory reference:

Authority to prohibit handguns on town-owned property, G.S. § 14-415.23



Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Visitor's Center Future Plan Discussion**

Board Meeting Date: **April 8, 2025**

Prepared By: **Jon Barlow – Town Manager**

Overview: Discussion on the future plans for the Visitor's Center is needed.

Extended Overview: After discovery of extensive mold in the Visitors Center, the board gave directions and supplied funds necessary to mitigate the building. However, a decision needs to be made on the future use of the Visitors Center in order to determine what additional steps need to be taken on the building and determine the final floor plan layout.

Background Attachment(s):

1. Parks & Recreation's comments
2. Planning/Historic comments

Recommended Action: Review and discuss.

Action: _____

Festival Command Site

1. **Centralized Festival Operations:** The visitors center serves as the **primary command center** during major downtown festivals. It provides a centralized location for all festival-related operations, making it easier to manage logistics, communicate with vendors, sponsors, and staff, and coordinate event details. With everything in one place, there is better oversight and less risk of miscommunication or confusion.
2. **Staff and Volunteer Coordination:** As the festival headquarters, the visitors center houses **volunteer check-in/out stations** and serves as the main point for staff coordination. This is where volunteers receive instructions, uniforms, and schedules. It also acts as a gathering point for staff to align on responsibilities. The ability to efficiently coordinate all volunteers and staff from one location ensures smooth event operations and quick response to any issues that arise.
3. **Communication Hub:** Festivals rely heavily on technology to communicate with various teams, sponsors, vendors, and emergency services. The visitors center provides the **only source of computers and phones** in the area that are **dedicated specifically to the event**. These devices are essential for:
 - **Real-time communication:** Coordinating with on-site personnel, managing social media updates, and responding to emails.
 - **Broadcasting important event updates:** Whether it's sending out emergency alerts, coordinating last-minute changes, or responding to attendee inquiries, a dedicated communication platform is key.
 - **Vendor and sponsor coordination:** Ensuring that logistics for food trucks, merchandise stands, and performers are running smoothly, especially if they require last-minute adjustments.
4. **Festival Supplies Storage and Management:** The visitors center also acts as a **storage hub** for festival supplies such as:
 - Event signage
 - First aid kits
 - Volunteer t-shirts, lanyards, and identification badges
 - Event programs and flyers

- Promotional materials and merchandise This central storage ensure that everything is easily accessible when needed and minimizes the time lost in searching for materials during the busy event days.
5. **Restrooms and Volunteer Comfort:** During festivals, the visitors center can provide **restrooms for staff, volunteers, and entertainers**, a major perk, as public restroom access in downtown areas can often be limited, especially during large events. Having these facilities on-site means people have easy access to basic necessities, reducing frustration and improving volunteer morale. In turn, this contributes to a more efficient and happier staff working environment.
 6. **Catering and Meals for Volunteers:** The visitors center can double as a **place to serve meals** or snacks to volunteers. Many festivals provide free meals or snacks to volunteers, and the visitors center can act as the **central catering location**, ensuring volunteers stay fueled and hydrated, which is essential for maintaining high levels of energy during long event days.
 7. **On-Site Media Coverage:** Often, media and press representatives use the visitors center as a **base of operations** for covering the festival. It is equipped with resources like internet access, space for interviews, and seating, which allows the media to effectively report on the event in real-time. This helps ensure the festival gets the coverage it deserves.
 8. **Important Documents and Festival Sign-Offs:** The visitors center is often the place where all key festival-related documents are stored, including:
 - Permits and event contracts
 - Insurance documents
 - Vendor agreements
 - Emergency response plans in case of any need for quick access to these documents, it is essential to have them in a centralized location to avoid delays or confusion during the event.
 9. **Training and Briefings:** Prior to the event, the visitors center can serve as the **location for staff and volunteer training or briefing sessions**. This allows the event organizers to conduct training and explain procedures for handling crowd control, safety measures, and customer service. It also provides a space to **address last-minute changes** before the festival kicks off.

Computers and Phones During Events:

The **computers and phones** available at the visitors center are indispensable during festivals because they are often the **only source** available for effective communication and data management. Some of the key uses include:

- **Coordinating schedules:** Many festival tasks are scheduled to the minute, and the computers at the visitors center ensure that all shifts, performances, and vendor setups stay on track.
- **Real-time issue resolution:** Problems like last-minute cancellations, equipment failures, or urgent requests from volunteers or attendees can often be resolved only through direct communication via these devices.
- **Managing event registration and ticketing:** For festivals that require online ticketing or registration, the visitors center provides a location to handle last-minute ticket sales, check-ins, and even troubleshooting for festival-goers.
- **Emergency alerts:** In case of inclement weather or safety issues, the computers and phones are used to send out **emergency alerts**, which could include notifications about event delays, alternative plans, or safety protocols.

The Visitors Center play an **indispensable role** in facilitating a **well-coordinated and successful festival**. It acts as the **nerve center** for operations and communications, ensuring that all moving parts of a festival come together smoothly.

Visitor Center

1. **Community Hub and Resource for Locals:** The visitors center is not just for tourists but also a valuable resource for local residents. It provides a central location for information on community events, services, and other local resources, fostering a sense of connection and engagement among residents.
2. **Economic Impact:** The visitors center serves as an essential resource for tourists, helping them explore the local area, which can drive foot traffic to local businesses. Tourists often rely on information provided by the center to navigate restaurants, shops, and attractions, thereby boosting the local economy.
3. **Tourism Promotion:** The center helps promote the city's image and attractions. It serves as a marketing tool, offering brochures, maps, and recommendations that showcase the area's landmarks, historical sites, and cultural offerings. This is crucial for maintaining and attracting new tourism to the area, especially in a competitive tourism market.
4. **Convenience and Comfort for Visitors:** A central location for tourists to seek guidance, rest, and take a break is essential. The visitors center offers a place to relax and recharge with comfortable seating, free Wi-Fi, and helpful information on transportation options, accommodations, and nearby attractions.
5. **Support for Large-Scale Events:** The visitors center can serve as a staging area for organizing large community events and special projects that require coordination, storage, and logistics. By housing festival supplies and serving as a volunteer and staff check-in point, it streamlines the event process and supports the smooth execution of major public celebrations.
6. **Increased Accessibility:** Without the visitors center, key information may be harder to access for individuals who do not have access to the internet or those who are unfamiliar with the area. The center provides an in-person, accessible, and human touch for those who need more personalized assistance.
7. **Attracting New Businesses and Partnerships:** By keeping the visitors center open, it creates opportunities for new partnerships with local businesses, hotels, transportation services, and attractions. Many businesses use the center to promote their services, benefiting from the foot traffic and increased visibility.
8. **Historical and Cultural Education:** The visitors center can showcase the local history and cultural significance of the area. It can be a place for exhibits, educational materials, and storytelling that help visitors and locals understand the unique character of the downtown area, fostering pride in the community.

9. **Improving Public Perception and Civic Pride:** Having an active, well-maintained visitors center reflects positively on the city, showing that it is invested in welcoming both locals and visitors. This can help build civic pride and demonstrate that the city values its residents, tourists, and the local business community.

Visitor Center as an asset to our National Register Historic District

The Visitor Center, also known as the Tucker Littleton House, is an important asset to Swansboro's Historic District as a contributing building. The district is at risk due to the number of demolitions and changes to the homes over the years and something happening to the integrity of this building could add to this tipping point. This does not just impact our designation as a historic district but also Certified Local Government grants that we receive from the state.

Though there are deed restrictions and covenants that can be put in place when selling the building, this does not always guarantee or prevent irreversible changes or damage to the historic integrity of this building. The best chance for the overall longevity and integrity of this building would be for it to stay under the care of the town.

It is important to note that over the years, countless volunteers from both the community, state historic preservation office, and the Swansboro Historic Association worked to either save this building from demolition, donated it to the town, moved it to its current location, and helped to get it designated as contributing to our historic district again.

Please consider the importance of keeping this building in our care for not just the community, but also the health of our invaluable historic district.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Brehmer

Town Planner



Board of Commissioners Meeting

Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Future Agenda Topics**

Board Meeting Date: **April 8, 2025**

Prepared By: **Alissa Fender – Town Clerk**

Overview: The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board with matters that staff anticipate/propose for upcoming meetings. It should be noted that these items are tentatively scheduled for the specified monthly agenda but are subject to change due to preparation of materials, public notice requirements, etc.

In providing this memo each month, we hope it will also provide an opportunity for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas, which will allow staff the opportunity to plan accordingly.

April 22nd

- * Recognition of Isabella – Military Child of the Year
- * Monthly financial report

April 23rd – Special Meeting for UDO/CAMA Land Use Plan Review, 6 p.m.

April 29th – Budget Workshop Special Meeting, 6 p.m.

<u>June Meeting Dates</u> 10th & 24th
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May 13th or 27th

- * Recognition of Swansboro Varsity Basketball Team
- * Monthly financial report

Future Agenda Items

- * Minimum Housing Code
- * Street Acceptance of Swansgate (*developer has applied*)
- * Waterfront Access and Development Plan (*review/revision considerations*)
- * Community Presentations (*ongoing monthly*)
- * DOD Grant
- * EMS Plan (*ongoing*)
- * Presentation – Proposal for Heritage Center Museum in Emmerton School Building (*postponed by presenter*)
- * Senate Bill 382 Down Zoning review
- * Project Coffee upcoming items
 - o Expand ETJ territory for Parcel # 019516 on Highway 24/W. Corbett Avenue
 - o Rezoning request for Parcel # 019516 & 011942 on Highway 24/W. Corbett Avenue from RA to MI