



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Special Meeting on Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Present were Mayor J. Alan Holden; Mayor Pro Tem Tom Myers, Commissioners Tracey Thomas, Page Dyer and Rick Paarfus; Town Manager David W. Hewett; Town Clerk Heather Finnell; Assistant Town Manager Christy Ferguson; Public Works Director Chris Clemmons; Inspections Director Tim Evans; Police Chief Jeremy Dixon; and Finance Officer Daniel McRainey. Commissioner Rick Smith was unable to attend the meeting.

Mayor Holden called the meeting to order.

Mayor Pro Tem Myers asked to eliminate agenda items 6 and 7. The Board agreed by consensus.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments were made.

**DISCUSS BUDGET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Mayor Pro Tem Myers reviewed the slide that was handed out during the Essentials of Municipal Government class (hereby incorporated into the minutes). He would like the Board to work together on a long-term vision. He said we have a special place and our goal is to keep it as much as they can as it is, without any big changes. He said we are a family beach; we are not like other beaches. He said if the purpose is to go some other direction, he thinks the Board should discuss it. Town Manager Hewett asked if the Land Use Plan has language concerning strategic goals. Inspections Director Evans agreed it does and so does the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mayor Pro Tem Myers says his vision would be to keep Holden Beach as it is. It is special, family orientated. It is unique, not like other places and we do not want to be overly commercial. Commissioner Thomas said she supports that vision. She agreed that she thinks the Land Use Plan does have a vision. The Board discussed the next steps.

Commissioner Paarfus said for goals and objectives he would like to consider: no tax increases, live within the budget, try not to do fund balance appropriations unless it is truly necessary, make sure we maintain our reserves in the General Fund, try to reduce how much money we carryover (he would like to get closer to our revenues and expenses matching), replenish the beach and inlet fund at an aggressive rate and preserve the other capital reserve funds.

Commissioner Paarfus said for reviewing budget items, he would look for the following from department heads: what did you spend last year, how much did you spend this year to date, what is your end-of-year outlook and next year's budget requests. With next year's budget, he is going to be looking for a basis or justification for costs.

Commissioner Paarfus said a suggested approach for categorizing and prioritizing budget items would be critical/necessary, non-critical. He reviewed examples of the categories. He provided information on how he would prioritize the items. He said department heads should ask themselves questions to include what the risk is if we don't fund an item, what else depends on that asset and alternatives.

Commissioner Thomas said what she would consider a successful budget is that all the must dos are done (safety, infrastructure and keeping the beach there), no tax increase, balance the budget without taking from savings and moving money to the beach fund. She said the expectations from department heads would be to have last year's spend, year-to-date spend and the full year outlook. She said when we get into the asks for next year, you would look at is this a must do, should do or a nice to have and set the priorities with the money we have for the nice to haves.

#### **DISCUSS APPROACH FOR REVIEWING BUDGET ITEMS AND DISCUSS APPROACH FOR CATEGORIZING AND PRIORITIZING BUDGET**

Commissioner Thomas reiterated the Board would like to see last year's spend on each item, year-to-date spend and the full year outlook. Mayor Pro Tem Myers added as you go through the items it is a good opportunity to go through deciding if they are must do, should do or nice to have. He explained how prioritizing should help.

Town Manager Hewett explained the first evolution may be a little rough due to the new operating system.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion to adjourn at 5:56 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Myers; second by Commissioner Paarfus; approved by unanimous vote.*

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J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Heather Finnell, Town Clerk