



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2026 – 5:00 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Page Dyer; Commissioners Sylvia Pate, Keith Smith, Tom Myers and Robert Brown; Town Manager Bryan Chadwick; Town Clerk Heather Finnell; Assistant Town Manager Christy Ferguson; Finance Director Daniel McRainey; Inspections Director Tim Evans, Public Works Director Chris Benton; Police Chief Steve Barger; Fire Chief Doug Todd; and Town Attorney Lydia Lavelle. Mayor J. Alan Holden was unable to attend the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Dyer asked for a moment of silence and called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Smith to approve the agenda; second by Commissioner Pate; approved by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Carlton Pittman talked about moving forward with the fire station. He also provided feedback about volunteering on committees and public participation.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 21, 2026, Regular Meeting of July 21, 2026, Special Meeting of July 24, 2026 and Special Meeting of July 28, 2026, Police Report, Inspections Department Report, Finance Department Report and Public Works Department Report

Motion by Commissioner Pate to approve as presented; second by Commissioner Brown; approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AMENDED FUND BALANCE POLICY

Town Manager Chadwick explained the current fund balance policy states the fund balance will be maintained with a balance of 40 to 70 percent. If the audited fund balance is more than 70 percent and the Board chooses to continue the policy, the funds over 70 percent will be transferred to the Beach & Inlet Capital Reserve Fund. With an increase in capital needs being discussed, funding trends making it more difficult for federal and state funding to be obtained and some longer wait times to receive reimbursement, there is a definite need to increase fund balance if those needs arise. He recommended increasing the amount maintained in the General Fund Balance to a minimum of 50 percent and a maximum of 100 percent. Anything over 100 percent would continue to be transferred to the Beach and Inlet Capital Reserve Fund with Board approval. Town Manager Chadwick also recommended removing section c in the policy. The information has been discussed with the Board, who will be deciding once the amount is refunded. He would like to remove the administrative authorization section. Authorizations should come from the Board. There are also highlighted portions that need to be changed to maintain consistency throughout the document.

Motion by Commissioner Pate that we approve the Fund Balance Policy Resolution 26-09; second by Commissioner Smith.

Commissioner Smith reviewed the proposed changes. He said the bottom line is if we had a disaster, we could operate the Town for one full year. Town Manager Chadwick agreed if it was at 100 percent. If it was at 50 percent, you could go for six months. He said we don't have the audited numbers for the end of 2026 yet. Commissioner Smith explained why he sees the changes as reorganization. Commissioner Myers said this is for the General Fund and we have ad valorem taxes that are more reliable than occupancy taxes. He suggested that the Board needs to clarify the capital needs they see coming (not in the policy). Town Manager Chadwick gave an example from Florence. He stated there may be grants and other funding opportunities for capital projects, but they would need to be funded upfront.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF AMENDED BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING SCHEDULE

Town Clerk Finnell explained it is recommended that the Board's meeting schedule be updated due to scheduling conflicts. The proposed new date for the October meeting is October 27th.

Motion by Commissioner Myers to approve the amended Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule; second by Commissioner Pate; approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AUDIT COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Town Clerk Finnell explained the Audit Committee is required to have a minimum of three members. The applicant the Board selected at the last meeting didn't accept the appointment so currently there are only two members. The Board discussed how to proceed. The consensus of the Board is to schedule a special meeting for September 15th at 4:45 p.m. If there is no interest, the Board will revisit the topic.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- Ocean Boulevard Stormwater – the layout, underground utility and grading design for the drainage system improvements for the two areas is well underway. Initial contact was made with DOT concerning the encroachments that will be needed for the infrastructure on DOT streets. They are working on the completion of field assessments including 404 wetlands, coastal wetlands and habitat assessments. They completed the database review of federally listed species that may be within the project area. Survey work is also completed to collect flagged wetland locations for use in the permitting process. Currently finalizing the jurisdictional determination packaged to be submitted to the Corps.
- Block Q Master Plan – Stakeholders meetings have been completed. The Board will have a work session on September 4th and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board will have a meeting on September 3rd.
- Block Q Stage – the ribbon cutting will be on September 4th.
- Resilient Coastal Communities Program – staff had a meeting with the engineer, grant administrator and CAT team. They are currently identifying possible projects that qualify.
- Canal Dredging – plans are being made for this coming winter. Staff continues to work with the Corps on the cost of dredge spoils disposal.
- Pier Property – MidAtlantic should begin on the surveying next week.
- Inlet Hazard Area – will be attending the CRC Meeting with Inspections Director Evans. Hardened structures and proposed changes to the Inlet Hazard Area will be discussed.
- DA 293 Maintenance – Corps continues to conduct maintenance.
- New Fire Station – currently working on a RFQ for engineering and design work for the new fire station. Looking at how it is located in the current spot. If the Board is looking at other alternatives, would love the Board to let him know in the near future. Location was discussed.
- Possible Crosswalk Enhancements – pursuing additional options for enhancing crosswalks through DOT and GSATS MPO. There may be a possibility of adding a few more crosswalks as well. Crosswalks were discussed.
- Beach Access Points – staff would like to begin identifying emergency access points on the western part of the island. The last emergency access is at the 800 block. After discussion, the Board gave consensus for staff to work with Attorney Lavelle.
- Strategic Planning – date is being scheduled.

- National Beach Sweep – will be participating on September 18th and 19th. More information will follow.
- Shag Lessons – taking an interest list.
- End of Summer/Beginning of Fall Bake-off – join us on September 16th at 1:00 p.m. Participants must pre-register.
- Stuff the Patrol Vehicle – staff will be collecting items at the concert this Sunday for distribution to our local school system.
- No Wake Zone – Wildlife has come back and said they approved the application for Conch to Rothschild, which is shorter than the requested area. They still need approval from the Corps.
- There will be a friendly stair competition on September 11th.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Maria Surprise stated the HBPOA will be meeting on September 5th. She provided details of the upcoming meeting.

Carlton Pittman talked about educating people on water safety.

Bob Babington suggested having magnets for beach safety.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Dyer

- Sorry mayor couldn't be here.
- Thanked staff for their hard work. July was extremely busy, hot and crowded. We had a lot going on. Knows our first responders more than earned their keep.
- Thanked Attorney Lavelle. Looking forward to her guidance.
- Labor Day is coming up. Be safe.

Commissioner Pate

- Thanked the staff for all their work.
- Excited about the strategic planning session.
- Do need to look at options for beach safety.
- Thanked everyone for coming out. Send her comments. Does read and listen to them. Does listen to committees. Doesn't always go with everybody's advice, but they do discuss it and take a look at it. Appreciates everyone's willingness to serve. Hopes people will step forward for the Audit Committee.

Commissioner Smith

- Thanked God for the Fire Department. They do a lot of work and preparation. Encouraged because the Police Department and Fire Department have things in place to take care of their people after incidents like the recent drownings.

- Received a lot of comments this week and month. Can't imagine what the family is going through with the recent incident. Thanked Town Manager Chadwick. Through this he has been consistent. Thinks we will end up with a layered response. Thinks there are a lot of things the Town can look at. Can look at water safety during strategic planning.
- Thanked John Woods for volunteering his time with the Public Works Department.

Commissioner Myers

- Drowning hit close to home. Would like beach patrol to fly yellow and red flags on high-risk days to increase awareness. Made that request before. The response seems to be liability concerns. Neighboring islands fly flags. Thinks the Town should consider it.
- Thanks for coming and listening in.

Commissioner Brown

- Thanked staff. It has been a tough month. Whether we were dealing with a couple of losses that even though we may not know them, it felt personal, to trying to manage water. Thanked staff for their diligent efforts managing that. Thanked Police, EMS and Fire for being able to respond to these events and for taking care of everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Pate to adjourn at 5:54 p.m.; second by Commissioner Smith; approved by unanimous vote.

J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

Heather Finnell, Town Clerk