



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026 – 5:00 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Public Assembly. Present were Mayor J. Alan Holden; Mayor Pro Tem Page Dyer; Commissioners Sylvia Pate, Keith Smith and Tom Myers; Town Manager Bryan Chadwick; Town Clerk Heather Finnell; Assistant Town Manager Christy Ferguson; Inspections Director Tim Evans; Finance Director Daniel McRainey; Public Works Director Chris Benton; Lieutenant Frank Dilworth; and Town Attorney Sydnee Moore.

Mayor Holden asked for a moment of silence and then called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer to approve (the agenda as presented); second by Commissioner Pate; approved by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Jim Bauer provided feedback on voting and quorums and a method for selecting member to fill the commissioner vacancy.

Lyn Holden encouraged the Board to look at the corridor study and its options before making a decision.

Will Carter provided feedback on the corridor study. He explained why he thinks it is a bad plan.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 17, 2026, Police Report, Inspections Department Report, Finance Department Report and Public Works Department Report

Motion by Commissioner Pate to approve the consent agenda; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer; approved by unanimous vote.

PRESENTATION BY BRUNSWICK COUNTY FOR UPCOMING BIOSOLIDS PROJECT

John Nichols, Regina Quintos-Pascual and Matt Henry from Brunswick County were in attendance. Mr. Nichols provided background on the project. He reviewed biosolids management challenges and biosolids benefits. He went over the costs of liquid processing and cake processing. Mr. Nichols provided information on the options for capital cost participation and the timeline for the project. Option A is Capacity and Upfront Capital Allocation and B is Optional Rate-Funded Scenario. He provided details on both options and reviewed the timeline.

Mayor Holden expressed his concerns with the county's request based on the Town's initial agreement with the county. Mr. Nichols provided information on rates for wholesale customers. Capacity, costs and timeline were discussed.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ORDINANCE 26-02, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING HOLDEN BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 30.15 VOTING AND QUORUMS

Town Clerk Finnell explained our Code of Ordinances are inconsistent with the Rules of Procedure the Board approved in November. Members of the Board expressed interest to amend the code to reflect the language approved in the rules. Amending the code will make the Town's definition of quorum be consistent with the general statute. She said she has heard concerns about this being a charter amendment. She explained what is typically treated as a charter amendment and the process if the Board wanted to treat it like a charter amendment instead of just an ordinance change.

Motion by Commissioner Smith that we approve the change to the ordinance to match the general statute as it is written in blue; second by Commissioner Pate.

How to move forward was discussed.

The Board came to a consensus to have Town Clerk Finnell prepare a Resolution of Intent for the Board's review.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH ADA ASSESSMENT

Inspections Director Evans explained he gave a full report on the assessment a while back. The Board asked staff to put it out for comment. They did receive a few comments. Once the assessment is accepted, it would become part of the budget process each year.

Motion by Commissioner Myers to approve; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer.

Commissioner Smith asked if the mediation is settled. Inspections Director Evans replied that the Town has fulfilled all the requirements agreed to in the mediation and then went beyond what was required. This is a proactive step. He explained the role of the ADA coordinator. Commissioner Pate inquired about the cost breakdown and budgeting. Inspections Director Evans answered that every year the Town will need to identify items to be budgeted for.

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Inspections Director Evans reviewed the background on the plan development and provided details on the plan.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer to approve the plan; second by Commissioner Smith; approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PROPOSALS FOR AUDIT SERVICES

Finance Director McRainey explained the Town received three responses for audit services. Staff's suggestion is to select Martin Starnes.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer to select Martin Starnes for audit services; second by Commissioner Pate.

Commissioner Myers detailed his concerns with moving forward. Town Manager Chadwick explained why the Audit Committee didn't participate in the scoring of the proposals. The process and having a set schedule for the Audit Committee was discussed. Discussion was held regarding utilizing the same audit firm.

The motion passed by 3 - 1 vote with Mayor Pro Tem Dyer and Commissioners Pate and Smith voting for the motion and Commissioner Myers voting in the negative.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO GRANT PERMISSION TO THE MAYOR TO SIGN A LETTER IN OPPOSITION OF THE TOWN OF FUQUAY-VARINA'S INTERBASIN TRANSFER REQUEST

Town Manager Chadwick said the Board approved Resolution 25-11, Opposing the Fuquay-Varina Interbasin Transfer (IBT) in December. Our resolution, in addition to multiple others were hand-delivered by the Cape Fear Council of Governments (COG) to the Environmental Management Commission. A group of working professionals has been assembled to develop a follow-up response in the form of a letter. The COG is requesting that the Board grant permission to the mayor or manager to sign the letter on behalf of the Board once it is completed.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer to have the letter signed in opposition of Town of Fuquay-Varina Interbasin Transfer request; second by Commissioner Myers; approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON NEXT STEPS IN FILLING THE VACANCY ON THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERES

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer that we do interviews for the seven applicants received for the vacant Board of Commissioners' spot; second by Commissioner Smith.

The process was discussed.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The interviews will be held at the next regular meeting. No selection will be made that day. Town Manager Chadwick asked the Board to send two questions to staff. Staff will review the questions and come up with a list of five to seven questions. There will be a one-minute opening and one minute closing. Questions are due by April 10th to the clerk.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 26-04 IN SUPPORT FOR THE HOLDEN BEACH CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Commissioner Pate said a copy of the study is included in the packets and provided background information. The study was completed in October 2023. In order to get on the county's agenda, they would like to see a resolution of support from the Town. Her understanding is the purpose of the project was to look at safety and economic aspects. It does make it more aesthetically pleasing. Chief Todd provided a letter of support which is in the packet. She understands there is some funding that does require a local match. The county and state would need to come up with the match if they want to move forward.

Commissioner Pate introduced Jabon Norris and asked if he could speak since he worked on the study. The Board agreed. Mr. Norris provided details on the process and the study. The area the Town maintains at the base of the bridge was discussed. Mr. Norris answered questions. The Board discussed how to move forward. The Board agreed to allow comments from the public. Will Carter and Lyn Holden provided their feedback.

Motion by Commissioner Pate to adopt the resolution in support of the Holden Beach Causeway Corridor Project, submit it to the Brunswick Community Commissioners and the secretary from the NCDOT; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer.

Mayor Pro Tem Dyer explained something needs to be done. She is unsure of adopting the plan but would like at least a consensus to have the county do something. Commissioner Smith would like to amend the motion to say the Town is in support of the Holden Beach Causeway redevelopment. It would show the Town's support for the project, but not a specific plan. Commissioner Pate would amend the motion but wouldn't vote for it. It is too open ended.

Mayor Pro Tem Dyer wants to at least move forward with the idea that we want to do something if the Board doesn't accept the plan tonight.

Mayor Holden announced the motion is considered amended since Commissioner Pate and Mayor Pro Tem Dyer agreed to the amendment. The amended motion is to support the Holden Beach Causeway Corridor redevelopment.

The Board further discussed how to move forward. Writing a letter of support for the redevelopment of the Holden Beach Causeway Corridor was suggested.

Commissioner Pate and Mayor Pro Tem Dyer agreed to remove the motion.

Motion by Commissioner Pate to submit a letter of support to the Brunswick County Commissioners saying that we support the redevelopment of the Holden Beach Causeway Corridor; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer.

After discussion the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL ITEMS

Phil Caldwell said the IBT is a bad idea and provided his reasons why. He said everyone should be a part of saying no.

Will Carter spoke in opposition of the corridor project.

Maria Surprise said the IBT is a very bad idea and asked people to make public comment.

Sally Caldwell thanked Mayor Holden for his help with a personal situation.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Block Q Master Plan – had a meeting with McGill this afternoon to discuss the Board's input on the scope of work.
- Block Q Stage Area – mandatory pre-bid meeting was held on March 13th. Bids due this Friday. Will be on April 10th agenda for the Board to choose.
- Employee Updates – Steve Barger has been selected as the chief. Lieutenant Dilworth is serving as the interim chief and we appreciate that. Public Works Director Benton received his cross-connection certification. Archie Archibald received his CDL. Brice Tripp received his Class C Distribution for Water and Penny King received her notary.
- Upcoming Events – Easter Egg Hunt will be held Good Friday.
- Paving bid invitations have been released with a return date of March 27th. Swordfish and Tuna are planned for this year. Award will also be on the April 10th meeting agenda.
- Corps is conducting maintenance at DA 293, which is on Sailfish. Please be aware there may be work occurring in the dredge spoil area.

- Next week he and Assistant Town Manager Ferguson will be attending the ASBPA Conference and making legislative visits on Capitol Hill. The funding request for the Lockwood Folly Inlet was submitted by Congressman Rouzer's deadline.
- Bike lane sweeping is scheduled for next week with details to follow.
- He and Assistant Town Manager Ferguson attended a fire service meeting at the county. It appears no fire tax will come to fruition this year. Working closely with Chief Todd on any changes that may originate on the county level.
- Staff is actively monitoring proposed changes to property tax laws at the state level.
- Manager's Report – would like to hand out the report the night of the meeting with the most current information and then Town Clerk Finnell will post it.

Motion by Commissioner Pate that we allow the manager to present his written report at the night of the meeting, but it be subsequently posted to the website and go out with the distribution list of the synopsis of the meeting; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer.

The board discussed the motion.

The motion passed by a 3 – 1 vote with Mayor Pro Tem Dyer and Commissioners Pate and Smith voting for the motion and Commissioner Myers voting in the negative.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

- Thanked everyone for coming. Been a lot of good discussion. Overall, it is a beautiful place.
- Had Assistant Town Manager Ferguson provide an update on the playground.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Dyer

- Thanked everyone for being here.
- Thanked everyone who put in an application for the vacant seat.

Commissioner Pate

- Thanked everyone for coming out. Keep the emails coming with suggestions.
- Hopes everyone continues to come to the meetings. Lots of exciting things going on. Be patient.
- Going to discuss the pier at the April 10th meeting.

Commissioner Smith

- Lots to be thankful for. Thanked God for the Public Works Department and the Inspections Department.

Commissioner Myers

- Thanks for coming, sticking with us and for being engaged.

CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTE 143-318.11(A)(3), TO CONSIDER THE QUALIFICATIONS, COMPETENCE, PERFORMANCE OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE AND NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTE 143-318.11(A)(1), TO PREVENT THE DISCLOSURE OF PRIVILEGED INFORMATION

Motion to go into Closed Session by Commissioner Smith at 8:23 p.m. (Town Clerk Finnell read the reason to enter Closed Session); second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer; approved by unanimous vote.

OPEN SESSION

The Board went into Open Session at 8:47 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. by Commissioner Smith; second by Mayor Pro Tem Dyer; approved by unanimous vote.

J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

Heather Finnell, Town Clerk