



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2021 – 5:00 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Public Hearing/Regular Meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Public Assembly. Present were Mayor J. Alan Holden; Mayor Pro Tem Gerald Brown; Commissioners Woody Tyner, Brian Murdock, Mike Sullivan and Pat Kwiatkowski; Town Manager David W. Hewett; Town Clerk Heather Finnell; Assistant Town Manager Christy Ferguson; Inspections Director Tim Evans; Public Works Director Chris Clemmons; Police Chief Jeremy Dixon; and Attorney Noel Fox.

**PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE 21-02, (FORMERLY ORDINANCE 20-18), AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE HOLDEN BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 157.006: DEFINITIONS (HEIGHT MEASURING POINT)**

Inspections Director Evans provided background on the ordinance. No public comments were received.

*Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Brown to close the public hearing at 5:04 p.m.; second by Commissioner Murdock; approved by unanimous vote.*

**REGULAR MEETING:**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Commissioner Tyner said he and Commissioner Murdock would like to delete item 22, Discussion and Possible Action on Parking Recommendations from the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Brown would like to not take any action on item 8, Discussion and Possible Action on System Development Fees Report. He would like to get more input. Town Manager Hewett explained we have a guest speaker who will present tonight. She will lay out the entire process. There is no action for the Board to consider tonight, other than receiving the report as an introduction to the process.

*Motion by Commissioner Sullivan to approve the agenda, withdrawing #22; second by Commissioner Murdock; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Motion by Commissioner Tyner to approve the minutes from January 19<sup>th</sup> as presented; second by Mayor Pro Tem Brown; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Town Clerk Finnell explained there are over 200 comments. All of the comments, except three pertain to parking, which was removed from the agenda. All of the comments have been provided to the Board and are posted on the website. The Board agreed to not read the comments regarding parking. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson read comments from Elaine Jordan, Tom Myers and Tracey Thomas (hereby incorporated into the minutes).

## **REPORT ON BIKE LANE POTENTIAL AND ASSOCIATED OCEAN BOULEVARD STATUS – CAITLIN MARKS & CHAD KIMES, NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Kimes explained the Department of Transportation's financial status is looking good. He went over the resurfacing area map which shows what they plan on paving over the next year. The contract for Ocean Boulevard will be let in December 2021.

Bike lanes are getting ready to get started in Ocean Isle Beach. If you request bike lanes, DOT doesn't pay to widen the lanes. They look to the community to pay that. He provided estimates for the east and west side. The Town would do the widening and drainage and the DOT pays for the resurfacing of entire thing. For the east side it would be \$403,000 and for the west side an additional \$1.2 million would be needed. Mr. Kimes said if the Town needs time to look for funding, they can adjust the let date. The goal is to put five feet on each side. It could shift based on existing utilities. He believes Sunset paid 100% of their bike lane project, Ocean Isle received additional funding from GSATS.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked if anything is going to be done where the heavy water is. Mr. Kimes said they could look at an infiltration system.

Mr. Kimes said they would like feedback in the next 30 – 60 days. Town Manager Hewett asked when the funding for a bike path would be required. Mr. Kimes replied the funds need to be ready when the contract is signed. Within the 60 days, he needs feedback on if the Town is going to proceed with the bike lanes. It wouldn't delay the project if the Town could come up with the money. The more time they have, the better. The resurfacing project will stay on the schedule unless the Board and DOT come to an agreement on the bike paths.

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT FEES REPORT – MIHAELA COOPERSMITH, RAFTELIS**

Town Manager Hewett said Mihaela Coopersmith is going to introduce the Board and public to the draft System Development Fees Report. This is the introduction of the draft report so we can begin the education process on how the calculation works. Ms. Coopersmith said all that is being asked of the Board today is that they hear how they calculated the fees and that that they allow the Town to publish the report for the required 45-day comment period. At the end of the 45 days the Town and Raftelis

will review any comments, take them into consideration and make any needed revisions. At that point fees will be presented to the Board for adoption.

System development fees (SDF) are one-time charges assessed against new development as a way to pay for facilities needed to support growth or to recoup costs for existing facilities. She provided background on why the study is being done and reviewed the process. The law allows for the fees to be calculated under three methodologies, the buy-in approach, the incremental/marginal cost approach and the combined approach. To calculate the fees, they first need to determine the methodology to be used for each system. Then they have to identify the cost of the facilities. Those form the system value. They consider/make any adjustments as necessary. Those are credits. They then derive a system development fee per unit and then scale that up based on units of demand. Ms. Coopersmith explained they are using the combined method for the water system and the buy-in for the sewer system.

Ms. Coopersmith explained how they calculated the total cost of the facilities. For the water system, they calculated the total replacement cost, new less depreciation of \$4.3 million. For the sewer system they calculated a total replacement cost, new less depreciation of \$31.5 million. Next, they look at fee adjustments or credit. On the water system they are adding the \$1.7 million water tower project. That calculates a total system value of \$6 million. In order to account for the fact that new users will be paying for some of the debt service for the water tank, they calculated a deduction of \$1.3 million on the system value. That results in a system value of \$4.7 million for the water system. For the sewer side they took the net plant value of \$31 million and deducted the outstanding debt principal of \$7.4 million. That leaves a net system value of \$24 million. They calculated the cost per gallon per day at \$7.92 for the water system. The cost per gallon per day for the wastewater system was calculated at \$24.10. The Town currently charges SDF per bedroom. The Town sends water for treatment at the county plant. The Town owns 1MGD capacity in the plant. Ms. Coopersmith said they took the county's ERU calculations and applied the same ones to the Town in order to scale up the fees. She explained ERU (equivalent residential unit).

The total calculated SDF per bedroom is \$960 for water and \$2,240 per bedroom for wastewater. The combined fees for one bedroom would be \$2,800, it would scale up to \$11,200 for four bedrooms. She explained how it would be scaled for commercial customers. It would be assessed on an individual basis.

Mayor Holden inquired about calculating fees for residential areas versus more commercial areas. Ms. Coopersmith explained it depends. Most of the time it is looked at based upon what the commercial company generates. Mayor Holden asked if our homeowner with two bedrooms would pay the same as a store per gallon. Ms. Coopersmith answered they would probably pay less because the store would be a three-bedroom equivalent as the minimum. It depends on the size of the store. You would need to talk to the engineers that assess the commercial customer. It is not something they would advise on. They would say to look at the demand and use the three-bedroom ERU as the starting point. Town Manager Hewett said he believes commercial users do their calculations based on the type of fixture or use. Inspections Director Evans agreed it is on both, it's based on the number of fixtures and its use. There is a formula.

Ms. Coopersmith explained they used two different methodologies because the water system had growth related capital improvement projects. There were not any on the sewer system to use, which is why the buy-in was used for the sewer system. Commissioner Sullivan asked if the methodology used to make the calculation increases the cost to the consumer or reduces it. Ms. Coopersmith replied it increases it, but not very much. She will verify the numbers and send them for review. They are set up to calculate under all methodologies. Commissioner Murdock said he is assuming this will only be charged on future construction on the island. Town Manager Hewett stated this is a calculation of a fee. This is just to introduce how the fees are calculated. There is no ordinance before the Board to consider now. Ms. Coopersmith added the maximum allowable under the law is calculated. You are allowed to adopt less than the maximum. Commissioner Sullivan asked if someone from the firm would be here for questions after this is published for comments. Ms. Coopersmith agreed she could be here.

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON BRUNSWICK COUNTY PROPOSED WHOLESALE WATER RATES**

Town Manager Hewett explained we have been advised by the county manager that the county is considering the increase of its wholesale water rate to the towns in an amount that is quite surprising. He believes the proposed increase is \$2.35 per 1,000 gallons. He provided a handout where he took a county water customer and showed what the county's proposed rate will do for them and the retail rate on Holden Beach (hereby incorporated into the minutes). The justification on increasing those rates is that the county has several capital projects.

Mayor Holden asked if there is any methodology available where an average can be applied (yearly consumption versus monthly consumption). He asked who sets those rates. Town Manager Hewett confirmed that the Town sets the rates. He did not speak to irrigation rates. He wanted to let people know about this. He was not aware this was coming forward. He has spoken to several other managers and they did not see it coming. Mayor Holden asked why an island property owner is paying more than the guy in the county. Town Manager Hewett said it is a smaller system with a higher level of service. Commissioner Sullivan said if this would go through it would cost someone living on the island almost \$16 a month more if based on 6,742 gallons, which is 48% increase. Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked if it is correct that if you do the calculation for irrigation, the irrigation bill would go up more than the indoor water because you pay for every gallon. Town Manager Hewett responded that he didn't do that calculation so he does not know. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said at one point Town Manager Hewett had an estimate that there would be a \$350,000 increase in water costs for the island based on the change. She inquired if that is still accurate. Town Manager Hewett responded he would need to look at it again to reconfirm. He confirmed that the Town can't run in a deficit.

Town Manager Hewett said he has put this on the agenda to see if the Board has any specific direction for him in communicating with the county. He has been communicating with others, but he wanted to make sure the Town didn't miss an opportunity to articulate our position if the Board desires to do so. Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked if there has been a sit down with other municipalities. Town Manager Hewett said based on his discussions they are not warm to this and question the validity of it. Mayor Holden stated he was talking to a resident about the growth of the county. They were wondering if the growth has anything to do with why we have to pay more for water or do the towns with the development get charged in a different way. Town Manager Hewett said our wholesale contract with the county expired last year. That was probably one of the last remaining ones. The answer he received to a question he posed that was similar to that was the wholesale customers have not been providing

capital fees to the county, like a residential customer in the county has on their base rate. He is not sure if the Town is getting consideration for all of the years that the Town was providing quantity consumption that was helping offset the operation of the plants. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said there is a sentiment that we are double charged.

#### **POLICE REPORT – CHIEF DIXON**

- Fortunately, there is not a lot to discuss for the January report. Call volume is pretty consistent, with typical numbers.
- The new officer was sworn in last month. He is progressing well through the training program. We have one more vacancy that we are working on filling.

#### **REPORT AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SPEED LIMIT ON OCEAN BOULEVARD**

Chief Dixon reviewed the DOT study. They found that 45 MPH is safe and reasonable for the offseason. That is in the ordinance as it is written. He explained why he contacted DOT for the study.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the Board wanted to continue with what the Town is doing or if they want to keep it at 35 MPH year-round. Attorney Fox agreed if the Board doesn't want to take action, the ordinance that is in existence will continue to be in existence. Commissioner Sullivan said he introduced this a year ago. When he did, he was in favor of lowering it to 35 MPH. Since it took a year to get here, he was much more cognizant of traffic. It is his opinion that the danger is greater if we allow more golf carts, which is what happens when you lower the speed limit to 35 MPH. He explained why.

*Motion by Commissioner Sullivan that we do not change the current ordinance and we leave it as it is.*

Inspections Director Evans said his understanding was the commissioners wanted crosswalks. Commissioner Sullivan said during the discussion we found out we could have four crosswalks. Inspections Director Evans said four have been designated and approved by DOT. Part of the approval is that the speed limit has to be 35 MPH. Commissioner Sullivan said that is why he wants to have a motion so everyone can state how they stand on this issue. He doesn't think the four crosswalks correlate with being safer. He thinks we are safer without the crosswalks and golf carts than we are with both of them.

*The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Brown.*

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said her position was going to be to wait until we get paving, but we now have a plan in front of us for paving. She asked where the crosswalks are supposed to be. Inspections Director Evans replied Jordan, Neptune, Starfish and the 900 block. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said we talked before about negotiating more crosswalks if we end up with more higher density areas. Inspections Director Evans said you had to meet certain densities to get crosswalks. That is why the four proposed are where they are at. Commissioner Kwiatkowski stated she does think we need crosswalks for safety's sake. She thinks it is worth lowering the speed limit, then relying on Police presence to start cracking down on illegal golf carts. Commissioner Tyner said if the Board is going to

change it, the Board needs to put it on the next meeting's agenda for the public's input. Commissioner Sullivan said he is trying to settle something that the Board has been kicking around for a year.

*Commissioner Sullivan withdrew the motion, with Mayor Pro Tem Brown in agreement. Commissioner Sullivan asked that the item be placed on next month's agenda.*

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ORDINANCE 21-01 (FORMERLY ORDINANCE 20-17), AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE HOLDEN BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 94.03: FRONTAL DUNE POLICY AND REGULATIONS**

Inspections Director Evans provided background on the proposed text amendment.

*Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski to adopt Town of Holden Beach Ordinance 21-01, An Ordinance Amending the Holden Beach Code of Ordinances, Section 94.03: Frontal Dune Policy and Regulations as presented; second by Commissioner Murdock; approved by unanimous vote.*

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ORDINANCE 21-02 (FORMERLY ORDINANCE 20-18), AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE HOLDEN BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 157.006: DEFINITIONS (HEIGHT MEASURING POINT)**

Inspections Director Evans said the Board held the public hearing. The Board can discuss it and take into consideration the consistency statement, but the ordinance cannot be adopted tonight. This is the ordinance that grants an exemption in X zones to measure the same as they do in A and B zones. He explained the proposed change.

*The Board would like the ordinance to be placed on the next meeting agenda.*

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 21-01, RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE NC REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**

Inspections Director Evans explained this is the update to our Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan allows the Town to be part of the regional plan, while maintaining our autonomy within. The only significant changes are those associated with our commitment to stricter NFIP and resiliency improvements to our sewer lift stations. He explained the process for the update and how it will affect the Town. Our consultants have said we have met our public notice requirements and the Town can adopt it by resolution tonight.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said in Appendix E in two places, it states no new generators were acquired during the implementation period. Inspections Director Evans replied that the plan was completed before the generator was purchased. The plan gets updated on a yearly basis. It will be updated to show the generator and the new lift station. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said page 66 refers to a beach management plan. She said the Town did have a new board that put together a beach management plan. Inspections Director Evans said the Town will be able to update this once FEMA approves it.

*Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski to adopt Resolution 21-01, for the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan adoption; second by Commissioner Sullivan; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 21-02, RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA, ADOPTING THE 2019 TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH LAND USE PLAN**

Town Clerk Finnell explained the Board approved the Land Use Plan at the last meeting. The Division of Coastal Management has asked that the Board pass a resolution verifying the action.

*Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Brown to approve Resolution 21-02, second by Commissioner Murdock; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON REVISED WASTE TRASH ORDINANCE (HOLDEN BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 50: SOLID WASTE)**

Commissioner Kwiatkowski explained in the proposed ordinance the focus is on getting the bins off the road, particularly during the summer season. There are specifications made about where racks could be based on how Emerald Isle handles it. There are times for the cans to be pushed out and rolled back. They also took out the allowance for substituting one waste can for a recycle can if you are a six-bedroom house or bigger. She has several things that need to be discussed if the Board wants to go forward. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said if the Board all agrees that the ordinance is a good starting place, they would put it out to the public to discuss at the next meeting.

Inspections Director Evans asked about the 30', our setbacks are 25'. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said she mirrored them on what Emerald Isle does. She said that is negotiable. She thinks the point is they don't want them in the setback area or too close to the street or sidewalk. Commissioner Sullivan agreed to put this on next month's agenda. He said with all of the parking comments the Board received, the people expressed their concerns for increased trash, public safety and property values. He thinks they should use the same analysis when they look at the ordinance. The idea of the ordinance is not to make life more difficult for somebody, it is to make life better for everybody. It is to reduce trash and to increase public safety and property values. He wants everybody's feedback, but he wants people to be consistent when considering this.

*The Board will have this on the agenda next month where the Board can take into account public comments and the Board can have discussion. It was in this month's packet and it will be in next month's packet.*

## **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' OBJECTIVES SET FOR THIS BUDGET YEAR WITH CONSIDERATION OF PRIORITIES FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THIS BUDGET CYCLE**

Commissioner Kwiatkowski stated she felt it was a good time to remind the commissioners of the objectives they set. She said if there are some that have not been conducted and they want to get them done during the budget year, now is the time to speak. A lot of them are done. There are a couple that haven't been addressed yet. One of them is the study for the second water tower. She also suggested the Board look at this to see how it may form a basis for next year.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked about getting something started for bids for lift station 2, now that 3 is done. Town Manager Hewett replied the Board should talk about the production of the engineer's deliverable for our as built for lift station 3 before moving towards administrative action of advertising for the upfit of lift station 2. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said she was hoping there would be a couple of items that the Board would want to get started on, if that is not the case they will need to take it to a budget discussion as soon as possible.

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SETTING A BUDGET CALENDAR**

Town Manager Hewett said we need to get the budget season kicked into gear. In order to do that, if the Board could provide him with numbers, types and kinds of workshops, calendars through the end of year, along with objectives, he will attempt to get a calendar together.

*Town Clerk Finnell will send an email to the Board asking for their availability. Town Manager Hewett said he will try for dates when the entire Board is available.*

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TOWN AND MARTIN STARNES AND ASSOCIATES FOR AUDIT SERVICES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 - 2021**

Town Manager Hewett said the proposed audit contract with Martin Starnes is in the packets for consideration. It is a standard Local Government Commission contract. It is in keeping with the year two price in their original proposal. The proposed contract was provided to the members of Audit Committee for their individual review. No concerns were set forth by the four members that responded as of the preparation of the memo on February 10<sup>th</sup>. He didn't hear from the 5<sup>th</sup> one.

*Motion by Commissioner Tyner that we accept the contract from Martin Starnes for audit services for this year; second by Mayor Pro Tem Brown; approved by unanimous vote.*

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 21-03, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 20-10, THE REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 -2021 (AMENDMENT NO. 6)**

Town Manager Hewett said our budget forecast for the 2021 budget year for occupancy tax was established with extreme uncertainty regarding collection, acknowledging the many variables related to COVID-19 impacts. We have actually had one of the best years for collection of occupancy tax in recent history. In order to remain in compliance with the Fiscal Control Act, we need to recognize what staff is forecasting for the remainder of the year for occupancy tax revenue collections and the related expenses that coincide with those revenues. The amendment forecasts a \$337,204 increase in accommodation tax for the remainder of the fiscal year. It recognizes the required transfer of Brunswick County Tourism Development Authority funding. We had provided funds for the construction cost of the 800 block and 764 Ocean Boulevard West. He will come back to that. The amendment includes the legal fees for easement acquisition, a Lockwood Folly Inlet May dredging event, one walkway rebuild and one repair at public accesses secondary to increased wear and tear, replacement of funds expended with additional COVID cleaning requirements for public restroom facilities, port-a-john rentals, court and dock maintenance at Bridgeview Park and repairs and upgrades to improve the handicap access. Town Manager Hewett reviewed the amounts in the budget

amendment. Many of the expenses are due to increased customer load. He asked the Board what they want him to do with the \$107,338 that was programmed to go to the construction of the parking lots. He proposed the Board either keep it in the BPART Fund as available to appropriate or they could transfer it to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Commissioner Sullivan asked about the \$22,995 for Halstead. Town Manager Hewett explained it is for handicap improvements that need to take place and electrical work. Commissioner Sullivan inquired how much the Board allocated already for the public restrooms, that the \$35,000 will be added to. Town Manager Hewett said \$20,000 is for additional COVID cleaning and the other \$15,000 is for additional port-a-johns that are needed to be put in the existing locations. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said the appropriation was \$70,000 in the beginning. \$50,000 was for renovation to the restroom, which hasn't occurred yet. In prior years we normally use \$20,000 for regular cleaning purposes. When we had to clean the bathrooms three times a day at the beginning of COVID, that was a \$15,000 contract that was split between that facility and the park. There is only \$3,000 that is unencumbered which won't take us through the cleaning for the season or the port-a-john rentals. Town Manager Hewett said the total amount allocated this year is \$105,000. It is all occupancy money.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said her preference would be to put \$107,388 into the sand fund. She asked if it would be best to rewrite the ordinance and approve it on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the special meeting. Town Manager Hewett responded that we are already overspent in the accommodations contribution to Brunswick County. He needs to write another check tomorrow and needs to get the books balanced.

*Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski that we adopt Budget Ordinance 21-03, with the understanding for access and rec \$107,338 is removed from that line item and instead put into the capital reserve sand fund; second by Commissioner Sullivan; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT FOR VACTOR TRUCK**

Public Works Director Clemmons said the budget includes funding in the amount of \$73,281 for the yearly installment of the purchase of a new vactor truck. Quotes were obtained through the North Carolina Sheriff's Association Procurement Program. The total purchase price of the vacuum truck is \$332,687. After the down payment of \$35,000 is applied, the Town would finance \$297,687. The first of five annual installments of \$64,773 will be due in December 2021.

*Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Brown to approve; second by Commissioner Murdock; approved by unanimous vote.*

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Federal Work Plan - Last month reported there was \$500,000 for an investigation and feasibility study for a Holden Beach Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Project. We have been contacted by the Wilmington District of the Corps and have been advised to standby. They will be forthcoming with instructions.
- FEMA – We are in the public notice period for Isaias. The period for Dorian just wrapped up. There is the potential that we can do all four storms (Florence, Michael, Dorian and Isaias) as one large project,

but approval of the Dorian and Isaias Project Worksheets will be required before moving ahead with them all. All inquiries specific to the public notice should be directed to FEMA.

- Sand fence project installation is about halfway done. They are almost to the pier. How far west the installation occurs will depend on CAMA permissions. Intent is to go as far as we can. The vegetation planting will follow that. We are under contract to replace about half a million plants impacted by Isaias. We performed an inspection last week of the vendor's greenhouses. It will probably be about eight weeks before they are ready to go into the ground. As soon as it warms up, we will put them out. They are sea oats, a hot weather plant. Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked if any of the plantings will be put in the bare areas from the NC State presentation. She asked if there were funds to have the soil checked to see if that is a problem area. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson replied we don't have money in the budget for the soil testing. The bids that were turned in were received before we heard the presentation.
- Coastal Resources Commission has a virtual meeting on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. There is an agenda that is full of items that are relevant to the Town (Inlet Hazard Areas, technical standards for beach fill projects, beach mats and the Beach and Inlet and Management Plan update). Encouraged others to listen.
- Kicked off the Parks & Recreation Master Plan update last Friday.

Commissioner Sullivan asked for clarification that the \$500,000 for the federal project hasn't been allocated yet. Town Manager Hewett confirmed that the Board still needs to vote on the federal project. He added we have not received the information on what is required yet. Mayor Pro Tem Brown said we need to make sure to keep up with the DOT project. Mayor Holden said he hopes it is on the next agenda.

## **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

- Thanked everyone for the prayers, cards and emails. COVID is real and he is glad to be back. Feels better every day. Thanks to everyone for carrying on during his absence. Has twenty years serving the Town and he doesn't think he missed three or four meetings. Mayor Pro Tem Brown did a great job.

## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Mayor Pro Tem Brown

- Glad to see Mayor Holden back in his chair. He does a really good job for the Town.
- Keep the folks who suffered from the tornado in our thoughts and prayers. Heard there was a lot of damage.
- Parking – thinks everything got off on the wrong foot. In the bulk of the emails, the comment that kept coming is that it should be paid parking. There is lot of interest in the HB Fishing Pier, as far as selling it. We will lose a lot of spaces when that sells. It was never anyone's idea to be detrimental to the island. We are trying to look ahead here. We need to plan and be willing to look forward. Thinks as a town, we can come together and start working on this parking. Remembers coming here as a kid when his grandfather brought him over and how fun it was. If a little kid comes from Fayetteville and can't get on the beach because there is nowhere to park; this is what keeps him moving forward. Thinks it needs to get on the forefront and stay there. We need to move forward. We have tons of talent on this island. Let's do something that is good for everyone. This beach belongs to everyone

and everybody should be able to enjoy it. Thankful for his home. Blessed to have it. Hopes we can work something out.

#### Commissioner Tyner

- Glad Mayor Holden is back and is over COVID. Thinks he did a great job on the email he sent out. It was a good update on what is going on in the Town. Appreciates him mentioning the chapel.
- Thanked everyone who sent the emails for feedback on parking. Thinks we learned a lot about people's opinions on parking. Would like to suggest to the Board that they have some conversations on revisiting what they would like the Parking Committee to do. Have a meeting coming up March 5<sup>th</sup>. Invited two vendors to come to the meeting to present their solutions to paid parking. They are educational sessions so we can learn possible solutions if we want to implement paid parking.

#### Commissioner Murdock

- Welcomed Mayor Holden back.
- Thoughts and prayers go out to the people affected by the storm to our south.
- Parking – main concern is the hindsight will hit us when the properties that are being parked on that are not Town properties are eventually developed. Can't get them back when they are gone. The email that was circulated was a little bit out of context. Although some of it was correct, doesn't think it touched on enough detail. Paid parking was always part of the agenda. These properties were brought to us as Town-owned properties by staff. Two of which that were purchased for the purpose of parking years ago. We didn't see the harm in putting them up for consideration. Now we know where you stand. Is a little concerned how the public is going to take those emails. It is a little harsh. Wants to make it clear that he wants everybody to be able to come and enjoy this beach. It is not ours to block you from doing that. Thinks there is some really good talent on the island. We need some alternatives if we are going to pursue this. No use of having a committee if the consensus is no parking. Hopes that is not the case. Thanks to everyone who commented.

#### Commissioner Sullivan

- Glad to have Mayor Holden back.
- Keep Grissettown in our thoughts and prayers.
- Would say the parking question overrode everything else on the agenda tonight. There are three items that will be on the agenda next month that should garner some comment from the public. Would appreciate if people would use the same order and give opinions on the speed limit, developmental fees and the trash ordinance. Try to be consistent and honest. If we are worried about trash and safety when it comes to parking, we should worry about trash and safety and property values when it comes to trash.
- Thinks what happened here is that the cart was put before the horse concerning parking. When the committee was established, he asked that the public be part of it. That wasn't done. Now we have the feedback. We had a parking committee that came out with a lot of information that he thinks should be the basis of where we go. The first thing that should be done is to determine if paid parking is viable. We need a business plan that shows that paid parking is economically feasible and viable for the Town. Believes that everyone has a right to get to the beach, but it is not our duty to guarantee that they do it. If there are only a certain number of spaces, people need to get here early. Our Land Use Plan (LUP) makes some assumptions about day trippers. If you look at the parking plan the Parking Committee gave two years ago, we have 226 marked parking places, 200 on-street, adjacent to the

marsh and 315 in the right-of-way. That is 726 parking spaces. The LUP suggests that four people will come in each car and that half of those cars will be turned over. If you take those figures, it allows for 4,356 people to come visit the beach on a daily basis. That's more than seven times the number of people who live on the island. We are very accommodating; we just can't guarantee. If those people are building their RV park, they are the ones that should make a way for their clients to get to this beach.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski

- Happy to have Mayor Holden back. Mayor Pro Tem Brown did a great job.
- Appreciated the fact that we received so many comments. When you do a comment during this COVID period, make sure your name and address is noted. There was a dozen or so emails that seemed to imply that we were trying to hurry some things along. During COVID, thinks this Board has been very careful to slow things down, to put things on the agenda several months in a row to allow people to have time to comment so the Board could further discuss things. In no way, shape or form does this Board want to do anything precipitously because the public can't be here. Rest assured we will continue to work at a slower pace, but we do have to do business.
- Thanked everyone who listened to this long meeting. Looks forward to having you around next month.

The Board took a recess from 7:32 p.m. – 7:38 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(A)(3), TO CONSULT WITH THE ATTORNEY AND N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(A)(6) TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS**

The Board went into Executive Session at 7:39 p.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.; second by Commissioner Tyner; approved by unanimous vote.*

---

J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

---

Heather Finnell, Town Clerk