

Heather Finnell

From: Cox <lvbusguy@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 2:00 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Comments for BOC Meeting 11_16_2021

As a HB property owner, I would like to submit the following comments to the BOC concerning agenda items for the meeting 11/16/21;

Agenda item 13, parking - I fully support the idea of paid parking on the island. There needs to be a controlled and organized method in which visitors, both day and long term, park, and the costs associated with planning, developing, maintaining and enforcing, are considered in a fee structure. In todays world, you can't hardly go anywhere that a parking fee isn't charged. Accommodating parking should NOT be on the backs of the Towns tax payers.

Agenda item 14, Oceanfront Lighting - I support the need to limit lighting on the oceanfront. There is a property in the 800 block of Ocean Blvd that illuminates (with multicolor lighting) their beach walkway nightly! It has to be on a timer, as they are on EVERY night until midnight. In the spirit of enjoying the beautiful beach we are blessed with, these lights impede the view to the east for many neighboring properties, several of which I frequent. On nights when the moon is rising it all but obscures that view. Isn't that why we have all chosen to be here, to enjoy what nature has to offer? In the spirit of our beach, please address this.

Agenda item 18, Property Purchase - I support the Town purchasing the pier, and Block Q, and/or any other property that would support the long term needs of the Town. Let's face it, there is very little property left, especially lots of any size. If the BOC lets these opportunities go by, we will have missed the boat. The times are what they are, and regardless of what the BOC has done in that past (missed opportunities) it's on y'all to make that tough decision now. The HBPOA's survey was written to get the answers they wanted. What's best for the folks who are here to just rent their properties and make money and what's best for the Town and its full time residents are two different things. What are you? If we don't accommodate the needs for allowing ALL those who want to enjoy HB, then we should be talking about a gate at the bridge.

Respectfully,

Property owners at 118 Starfish Dr.

Sent from my iPad

Heather Finnell

From: tmmyers@atmc.net
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 1:33 PM
To: vccbrian@gmail.com; 'Michael Sullivan'; pattykwi@gmail.com; 'Rick Smith'; geraldbrownb365@gmail.com; bocmurdock@gmail.com
Cc: Heather Finnell
Subject: Input for Tonight's Meeting

Commissioners,

You have asked property owners to share their opinions related to the pier and parking. The HBPOA has recently conducted a poll and is currently conducting a survey to collect opinions on these topics. As of late last week, we received 234 responses from the property owners who received our email request. We are in the process of mailing postcards to all property owners on the island, including those that received the email. The postcards have not yet been delivered so we have not received responses from these owners. However, based on our experience from previous surveys, we do not expect a significant difference in the opinions of these two groups.

Here is what the poll and survey results say, along with the corresponding percentage of responses:

- Do not purchase the pier without a plan for what we are going to do with it and how much it will cost (82%)
- Do not increase taxes to cover costs associated with the pier (72%)
- Set a limit on the amount of parking to protect the character of the island (95%)
- Do not purchase more property for parking (75%)
- Do not allow ROW parking in front of private properties (90%)
- Allow owners to use posts and ropes (90%)
- Do not incur any additional debt without a public vote (78%)
- Be more transparent in decisions regarding the use of taxpayer funds (87%)

We recognize that you have been elected as our Town leaders to represent all property owners, and are empowered to make decisions that will impact the future of the island for everyone. This is a very significant responsibility that voters have given you.

HBPOA's mission is also to represent the interests of property owners, the vast majority of whom do not live here, are often unable to attend Town meetings, and find the audio almost impossible to follow. A large number are very upset that several Commissioners don't seem to care about the opinions of property owners, and refuse to even acknowledge the validity of any poll or survey that doesn't agree with what they personally want to do. Some owners are questioning which side of the bridge their loyalty resides.

Since we are both responsible for representing property owners on the island, we should be working together to achieve common objectives. As you can see from our survey results, this does not appear to be the case with regards to parking and purchasing the pier.

There will most likely be an extreme reaction from property owners if the Town proceeds down the path of buying property for over 1,000 parking spaces and using the revenue to purchase and repair the pier. If you need additional evidence, we would be glad to facilitate a poll or petition related to this plan.

Respectfully,
Tom Myers, President
Holden Beach Property Owners Association

Heather Finnell

From: Vicki Myers <vymyers@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 1:26 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Public Comment on Pier Purchase

Mayor Holden and Commissioners,

We own two homes on Holden Beach and live here full-time. I am OPPOSED to the pier purchase.

The only "plan" I have heard you put forth was from Commissioner Murdock at last week's Special Meeting was to put over 1000 paid parking spots all over the island to generate enough income for the debt service and occasional repairs or improvements. The idea that you would change the island so drastically to support this purchase is appalling. Make no mistake, adding that much parking will forever alter the character of our beach, the reason we all chose to live here and the reason renters continue to spend vacations here. Commissioner Murdock's comments about being "hopeful" the plan would work is totally inappropriate for public money. The old saying **"Don't let a wishbone grow where a backbone should be"** comes to mind.

Vicki Y. Myers
301 Ocean Blvd. West
Holden Beach, NC

Heather Finnell

From: Greg Dienna <gregdienna@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 5:46 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Cc: HBPOA
Subject: Pier purchase - vehemently opposed!

Greg and Laura Dienna
316 Brunswick Ave West

We are 100% opposed to the town purchasing the pier and nearby lots without a clear understanding of the future use, cost to repair the structures, and expectation for repayment.

This is a complete abuse of power and I'm shocked that the commissioners would commit millions of taxpayer dollars not knowing the basic financials.

Sent from my iPhone

Heather Finnell

From: Louis Cutajar <lousviews.hbpoin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 4:11 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Public Comments - Pier Property Purchase

BOC's Regular Meeting 11/16

Pier Property Purchase

Just to be clear, I am neither for nor against the pier property purchase

Every member of the Board has asked for input and guidance from the public on this complicated issue

Say what you want about not getting a lot of opposition but the opposite is true too you don't have a lot of community support either

The public still does not have enough information to formulate an informed opinion

** Both the HBPOA survey and Lou's Views poll clearly indicated that was the case*

It's difficult to support the proposed purchase of the pier properties until we know the following:

- 1. What is the intended use of the property?*
- 2. What is the business plan?*
- 3. How do they plan to pay for it?*
 - * Projected revenues and expenses*
- 4. What is this going to cost property owners either with taxes or an assessment?*

Time is running out, now would be a good time to share this information with us

11/15

Lou

<https://lousviews.com/>

Heather Finnell

From: Jayne Bremer <bremerjay@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 3:34 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Parking and Pier comments for the BOC Mtg.

PARKING

The Town of Holden Beach is in a dilemma, people want to come to the beach with all the benefits while property owners suffer all the consequences. To be clear I am not anti-tourist, vacationer, or day tripper. I would just like to NOT foot the bill. This appears to be similar to the rolling back of the garbage cans previously debated by the town council... if I am paying for a service, in this case parking spaces, I should be enjoying the benefits of parking spaces. However, I have a driveway where I park my vehicles and that is part of the property taxes I am already paying Brunswick County and the TOWN of HOLDEN BEACH.

Taxpayers should not be underwriting the cost of the proposed parking spaces. The tourists, vacationers and day trippers should factor the cost of parking into their beach activity. Parking should not be FREE. It is a question of who should pay for the benefit of parking their vehicle.

I understand the balancing act between property owners accommodating visitors with access to the beach but by creating public parking in residential areas causes some great concerns: traffic congestion, trash, beach access and the lovely view of the marshland is now replaced by a lovely view of parked cars. Why would property owners want something or pay for something they does NOT benefit them?

Speaking as a homeowner, who does not rent their beach cottage and pays property taxes to both the county and town, it upsets me to know that you are asking us to foot the bill for non-resident's pleasure. People have to realize coming to the beach is NOT a free activity.

There is a HUGE cost for building and maintaining these parking areas! And, it is not all just money. As homeowner we already pay taxes to maintain the island streets and even parking enforcement. We should not have to provide parking, deal with trash or have our view be parked vehicles.

The TOWN should be considering ways to ease the traffic; getting on the island is stop-and-go, and stop! My suggestion is have DOT make a LARGE traffic circle at the bottom of the bridge on the island.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES abound with PAID PARKING. Remote parking with a shuttle service and as a possible option. Another business opportunity would be for a two-story parking garage

with paid parking attendants. Maybe even valet parking... Again, taxpayers should not have to underwrite these business opportunities and the cost of parking would be paid by the visitors.

Another idea, the Town of Holden Beach could make annual passes available for mainland residents to access the beach. Sell annual passes which allow mainland residents access to the paid parking areas. The pass must permanently affix it to the lower left corner of the vehicle windshield and cheaper than 30 days of parking at the daily rate.

Think of the revenue potential! Vehicles that do not have a visible parking pass would be subject to a citation, which will be mailed to the vehicle's registered owner. Another revenue stream!!

PIER

Now that the inspection is underway (I can't say that it is completed as the report does not include the underwater portion of the pier) it appears that the pier and surrounding property is a bad investment for the property owners of Holden Beach. The tax money needed to build a new building, up to code, which as I understand it, would include kitchen facilities for a restaurant, bathrooms and access to the new or refurbished pier would be in the millions and raise the property tax rate, It is unconscionable that the board would commit this amount of money without current property owners approval. The board has made one property owner very happy with our tax money, the current owner of the pier.

One last comment, Commissioner Murdock by now I hope you have heard the property owners' true feelings about the pier and parking on the island. The first survey and subsequent survey reflect property owners' opinions on the pier and building. Please listen and do not change Holden Beach from a family beach to a "Come one, come all... our property owners will take care of you beach!"

Jayne

112 Dolphin
Holden Beach, NC 28462
Jayne Bremer
bremerjay@gmail.com
919-824-0666

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message

Heather Finnell

From: Rick Paarfus <rpaarfus@ec.rr.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 2:05 PM
To: alan@alanholdenrealty.com; geraldbrown365@gmail.com; BOCmurdock@gmail.com; sullivm4@gmail.com; pattykwi@gmail.com; rsmith9431@gmail.com; David Hewett; Heather Finnell
Subject: Comments concerning paid parking and the pier purchase discussion during 11012-21 meeting

Commissioners,

I listened to the audio of the 11-12 21 meeting held at 8:00 a.m. I heard Commissioner Murdock talk at length about the pier and paid parking. Mr. Murdock stated, among other things, that paid parking revenue is needed to pay for the pier as well as other projects and land purchases. He also said that we haven't had parking committee meetings because we did not have a vendor and the meetings would have been hopeless. I am on that committee and I disagree. Bridge and street traffic issues, parking locations and sanitation needs could have been evaluated. These issues are outside the purview of the parking vendor. Mr. Murdock also said that the Town would get 70 percent of over 600K in parking revenue to pay for the pier. Last, Mr. Murdock also said that the purpose of paid parking was to pay for projects and land purchases. Mr. Murdock did say he was expressing his own opinions and that there were not final numbers from the parking committee.

It should be noted that Mr. Murdock was not able to attend the last parking committee meeting and does not have first hand knowledge about what transpired there. In his talk, Mr. Murdock does not mention that the 600K revenue he referenced is based on 800 parking spaces, including right of way parking, golf cart parking at the end of streets, and building some new lots on town owned land. Had Mr. Murdock been at the meeting he would have known that there are setback/safety issues with the golf cart parking, and that many on the committee opposed right of way parking, particularly next to the marsh areas. As no "reasonable" number of parking spaces has been determined by the committee any revenue assumption to pay for the pier is premature. Further, this assumption does not account for any other costs associated with implementing paid parking. The parking committee also discussed phasing in paid parking, so the 600K revenue will not be immediately available for debt service. I hope that the parking discussion on 11-16 will be more reflective of the last committee meeting. With regard to the purpose of implementing paid parking, it is my understanding that it was initially considered to be a revenue stream to pay for costs associated with public parking only, not for other purchases and projects.

With regard to the pier purchase, I am extremely disappointed that the BOC has not produced a plan for the pier purchase and use. Some attempt at a plan should have been attempted and published by now. Had this been done, I believe there would be a lot more support for it, even if there is a tax increase. I would like to see the pier facility stay and continue its presence purpose PROVIDED it is affordable. I am not aware of any written justification for purchasing the pier, other than "we had better buy it before it is gone". If written justification is available, please let me know. On this issue, I feel that the BOC has dismissed the wishes of the property owners for a plan and stubbornly proceeded with their own preferences. If the pier property is not purchased, it is the BOC's fault for not developing a plan. If the property owners get stuck with a substantial unanticipated tax increase, this will be the BOC's fault as well. As commissioners, I think it is your duty to provide data that supports your course of action/opinion. Statements like "I hope" and "I think we can do it" are not sufficient to gain public support.

Commissioners have stated more than once that there is a lot of misinformation going around. I am sure there is some truth to that. I would appreciate the BOC specifically calling out the misinformation and setting the record straight. It is not fair that the BOC gets unfairly criticized without a rebuttal. More importantly, we need to know the facts. I would also ask that the BOC look at the information that it disseminates to insure that it is accurate and complete as well. I heard statements made during the meeting concerning USACE and FEMA that I question the accuracy of for which clarification is warranted.

Last, in the Friday meeting, some commissioners stated that we can't stop people from coming across the bridge and parking all over the place. True, people are free to cross the bridge at will. However, they are not allowed to park anywhere they can find. This is an enforcement issue. If parking restrictions are enforced, people will learn to respect the town ordinances. If additional police staff is needed, parking revenue should pay for that.

Thanks for your time.

Respectfully,

Rick Paarfus

Heather Finnell

From: Nathan Christie <nxchristie@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 1:31 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Cc: R & B Gunn; Bekah Gunn-Christie
Subject: Pier Purchase

Hi Heather,

Could you please ensure that this letter be read at the commissioners meeting?

Thank you.

To Mayor Holden and the Town of Holden Beach Commissioners:

This letter is to express my opposition to the Town of Holden Beach purchasing the pier. The commissioners have not laid out a plan for its intended use and costs to rebuild, repair, insure, operate, and maintain. Will the town be hiring employees to work at the pier? These are questions that have not been answered.

It is not the job of government to speculate on real estate investment. Indeed, if this property has been passed up by private industry, it signals that it is NOT a good investment at this time. This indicates that the commissioners are planning to ultimately use taxpayer money to bail out and handful of individuals. This is picking winners and is unacceptable.

Commissioner Murdock took the position that the survey conducted by the Holden Beach Property Owners Association that resulted in greater than 80% opposition to purchase was skewed. How else would Mr. Murdock like the masses to express their opinions?

To the average taxpayer in Holden Beach, the appearance of Alan Holden Real Estate profiting from the sale of the property and the potential for Mr. Murdock's construction company to profit from its reconstruction looks like politicians using their positions of power to pad their pockets.

Please refrain from plunging Holden Beach into debt for a losing investment that the homeowners and private investors oppose.

Nathan Christie
813 Ocean Blvd West

Heather Finnell

From: Rebekah Gunn <rebekah.gunn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 12:44 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier purchase

Heather, I request that this letter be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners and Mayor, and maintained on file with documents pertaining to the potential purchase of the pier and associated property located at 441 Ocean Blvd West (the "Bass Property.") Thank you.

Dear Honorable Commissioners Brown, Kwiatkowski, Murdock, Smith and Sullivan, and Honorable Mayor Holden:

I am writing to state my opposition to the purchase of the pier and associated property located at 441 Ocean Blvd West (the "Bass Property.")

The deliberations associated with the proposed purchase of the Bass Property and issuance of the Public Debt to pay for it have been shrouded in secrecy with very little communication with the public. In addition, property owners will be directly affected by this potential purchase yet have received minimal information with regards to communications, minutes, plans, inspection reports, financial models or other documents. There are significant concerns with regards to potential conflicts of interest, both with Mayor Holden and Commissioner Murdock. Mayor Holden has indicated he will not take a commission from the sale of the property which is represented by his real estate company, but it is not clear to me whether his company will still take a commission. Regardless, his company has the potential to profit from the attention it draws from this representation which essentially amounts to free advertising. Commissioner Murdock is a NC Licensed Contractor and has been one of the greatest proponents of the purchase of the Bass Property. It is not difficult to surmise that he may hope to have his company hired to carry out renovations on the dilapidated structure, or the entire construction of a new structure if the Town should determine to tear down the existing one.

The structures associated with the Bass Property are in dire need of repair or replacement, yet the selling price does not reflect the condition of these structures. Not only has the seller been unwilling to work with the Town with regards to repairs or negotiation of the price, he has directly profited from his lack of response which resulted in an extension of due diligence and a payment of \$50,000 that is his to keep even if the Town walks away from the sale. The Bass Property has been on the market for some time, yet has not sold in spite of the current climate of a "Seller's Market." Clearly, the Bass Property is overpriced.

I realize that there are grants that the Town hopes to garner in order to offset the cost of the purchase of the Bass Property. However, the current structures require immediate repair, and will also require considerable ongoing maintenance due to the inherent oceanfront nature of the structures. It is unreasonable to expect that grants will cover these costs into perpetuity, yet a business plan has not been proposed by the Board of Commissioners to determine how the financial burden will be shouldered. As a property owner, I can only anticipate that the costs will be passed on in the form of rising property taxes. I fear the Bass Property will become an albatross around the neck of Holden Beach's property owners, costing money outright in the form of increased property taxes while lowering the actual value of the properties since potential buyers may not wish to become ensnared in this financial burden. To simply incur a \$3.3 million dollar debt (before repairs are undertaken, I might add!) without a plan for ongoing financial sustainability is incomprehensible. Perhaps such a plan exists, but I have not heard of it.

In closing, I am opposed to the purchase of the pier and associated property located at 441 Ocean Blvd West (the "Bass Property") unless 1. more information is shared with the public pertaining to a concrete plan for long term financial sustainability that does not involve raising property taxes, 2. a strong case is put forth pertaining to the merits of the purchase of the Bass Property, and 3. potential conflicts of interest are addressed and rectified.

Heather Finnell

From: Robin Haines <rticehaines@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 9:08 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier purchase

Good morning Heather,

Please add my name to the list of the homeowners opposed to the purchase of the pier under the current circumstances. Thank you!

Robin Tice- Haines
119 Shell Drive
Holden Beach, NC
3363123265

Sent from my iPhone

Heather Finnell

From: Doug Shoffner <dshoffner@carolinasupplyinc.com>
Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 7:40 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Cc: HBPOA
Subject: Pier purchase

We own a home at 147 Tuna Drive. We are; Stephen and Nancy Shoffner.
We oppose buying the pier! It is a black hole....too much expense. We do not need more taxes, plus we do not need more people at HB.
We have a wonderful beach, and it is busy enough.

Sent from my iPhone

Heather Finnell

From: Rebekah Gunn <gunnhsd@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 9:06 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Oppose Purchase of Pier

The pier is in deplorable condition--it is overpriced and will drain town resources to maintain it and to operate it.

I adamantly oppose the Town of Holden Beach purchasing the pier.

Rebekah McBane Gunn (Mrs. Robert Gunn)

Heather Finnell

From: Doug Page <dougpage0423@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 6:21 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Property Purchase

We are in support of the town purchasing the Pier property. We don't often in life have the opportunity to make significant decisions that may impact our community for generations to come, but this is one of them. This is a chance to secure oceanfront access for so many reasons and a bit of history for Holden Beach.

The negatives are there and the reality of taking on such a huge proposition is intimidating but we have faith that our town leaders will endeavor to do the right thing. There are no guarantees, especially when it comes to grants etc. but if we do the right thing for all of NC by allowing access, parking (paid), and the opportunity to experience the pier, then I have faith that the state and the federal government would support us trying to save this for all. Memories and access for all! As taxpayers here, we aren't exclusively allowed the right to enjoy this lovely island. It's so easy to become protectionist and we'd like us to be known as the family beach, where everyone is welcome.

--

Doug and Tina Page

Heather Finnell

From: Alyson and Jim Bauer <jimalyson1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 3:10 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: A Loud "NO!" on the Purchase of Pier Property

We feel that the pier is an overvalued white elephant that has too many maintenance and structural issues, will never have a return on the investment made and once purchased, will probably be eventually sold at a considerable loss to developers for multi-story condos.

.

The pier has been up for sale for years. In this real estate market, where properties are literally flying off the market in a day or two, this is the best example that the pier is overvalued to a ridiculous degree. The town should be looking for value.

.

The pier and surrounding properties are in sad, sad shape. The maintenance, insurance and liability issues are too great. How can you recoup the millions of dollars used for this purchase when you can only charge a few dollars for each pier fisherman or parking space? The pier isn't wide enough and I would assume that it isn't strong enough to support a restaurant or a similar commercial venture that would pay a reasonable return. The insurance costs must also be ridiculous.

.

Lastly, we believe that immediately after the sale of the pier is sold to the town the issues I have mentioned above will

suddenly become manifest and the town will try to sell, (at an incredible loss,) to greedy developers. They will want big, tall condos that don't fit with the style or the infrastructure of Holden Beach. And we don't have to look any farther than the headlines from Miami's recent building collapse to see what happens when greedy developers (hand in hand with the city managers) build garbage housing on sand.

.

If this proposal is enacted, the short sighted decisions of the town will result in millions of dollars of liability for the residents of Holden Beach with absolutely no gain. And, however it is planned that property owners taxes will not be affected by this purchase and maintenance, we find that would be virtually impossible.

.

Lastly, we were informed of the last meeting at Town Hall with less than 24 hours to attend. One of the commissioners went on and on about how somehow, parking would pay for this and that somehow there would be an income from parking of \$600,000 a year. May I point out that at five dollars a spot per hour, that is 120,000 parking transactions? And the lot is seldom full even now when the parking is free.

.

It is time for the commissioners who back this plan to take their heads out of the sand and realize that no one, other than those who obviously have their fingers in the pie, want this.

.

This proposal to our opinion is, in a word, stupid.

.

Full Time Residents: Jim and Alyson Bauer, 329 OBW, HB. (914)
424 0131

Heather Finnell

From: Rick Paarfus <rpaarfus@ec.rr.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 2:47 PM
To: alan@alanholdenrealty.com; geraldbrownb365@gmail.com; BOCmurdock@gmail.com; sullivm4@gmail.com; pattykwi@gmail.com; rsmith9431@gmail.com; David Hewett; Heather Finnell
Subject: Objection to Pier Purchase

Commissioners,

I still do not support the pier purchase for the following reasons:

1. The intended use for the property has not been identified, other than for parking and beach access. Block Q would be a far better purchase for parking, providing approximately twice the spaces, costs less, is more protected from the oceanfront, has bathroom facilities, and does not carry the liability of the pier structure and pier house. A beach access can be provided by buying a property that does not have the pier and pier house liabilities as well.
2. Most property owners would like to have a pier facility if it is affordable, but no such plan for keeping a pier facility, how much it will cost, or how it will be paid for has been developed/presented.
3. The estimated tax increase required to restore the pier facility could have been developed, but has not. Further, the pier inspection that was done was insufficient to assess repair costs, due to the lack of the complete underwater assessment.
4. The pier and pier house will likely be labeled an attractive nuisance/safety hazard by adjacent property owners if they are merely abandoned in place. The town may be forced to tear it down at some additional cost as yet to be identified.
5. It has been stated that the property could be held and sold at a later date, perhaps for a profit. I do not believe the town should be in the real estate speculation business.
6. The town should not go into debt to buy property that it does not have a well defined, justified use for.
7. To assume paid parking will cover the costs is ludicrous. The number of spaces, purchase property for parking, and rates is far from being defined.

Unfortunately, this purchase has not been adequately justified with regard to use, cost, and funding, even though there has been time to do it. I hate to see the pier facility go away, but there is currently no plan to save it even if it was purchased. I simply cannot support the town going into debt to purchase the property without a plan to keep the pier facility at an affordable cost.

Respectfully,

Rick Paarfus

Heather Finnell

From: smjones01 <smjones01@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 11:10 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier purchase

Given where we are with the proposed purchase I would suggest, at a minimum, that the town renegotiate the purchase price with the owner to cover the anticipated costs to add life to the pier. Here is the issue with the pier - there is no one with any business sense who would want to purchase that parcel for the asking price. It cannot generate adequate return from any business that might be placed there to justify that price. Additionally, any one who was purchasing to use for another purpose altogether would not be willing to pay that price due to costs to tear down the pier and building.

The town seems to be giving the owner whatever he wants, but the reality is that the town is the only entity that would likely have interest in the property at anywhere near the current price. You have leverage. Now that you have more info, renegotiate or walk away from the deal. If you walk, you can turn attention to the properties under the bridge.

This town will survive and thrive whether it has a pier or not.

Respectfully,

Steve Jones
225 Lois Ave

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

Heather Finnell

From: silveradoes@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 10:33 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Purchase of the town pier
Attachments: town letter.docx

Heather,
Attached, please find a letter from myself and my husband against purchasing the pier & property.
Rosemary Fournier
Robert Barresi
1339 OBW

Rosemary Fournier

1339 Ocean Blvd West

As an owner and full time resident of Holden Beach, I am vehemently opposed to the purchase of the pier. I was opposed at the start to the town taking on such debt to purchase the pier and parcel of land without the home owners voting on such an action; since we are the ones who will likely pay for the some of the debt through property taxes.

Given the current poor status of the pier and the building on the land, originally 2 sources of possible income to the town, I cannot approve of the town taking on this level of debt by purchasing the pier property. I do not see this as a smart or needed purchase for the town of Holden Beach. It appears to me that a few powerful people in this town government, who are also local business owners are making this decision based on their (and their local business friend's) best interest. Additionally, Holden Beach has numerous access points and may be able to find less costless methods to find another if so needed.

My husband & I chose Holden Beach NC as the place to live because it has a quaint feel and is not overdeveloped or commercial as many coastal towns are. How can we understand why a small town this small would be willing to take on such debt when their roads are in bad shape and flood frequently, their causeway is unattractive and looks like a trailer park, and there is ongoing need to repair the bridge and beach access walkways.

I hope the town government will make the right decision and deny the purchase of the pier property. In my opinion there are more important "fish to fry" here at Holden Beach

Rosemary Fournier

Heather Finnell

From: Richard Parks <richardcparks@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 10:23 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier

Heather,

As a Holden Beach resident, only 6 houses down from the pier, I am vehemently opposed to the purchase by the town. I am opposed to Town funds being spent on an asset where the transaction has been less than transparent. I am opposed to Town funds being spent on an asset that will require ongoing financial commitments for years to come, with no plan to pay for it, other than increasing my taxes. I am opposed to Town funds being spent on an asset, when so many other more needed projects are being tabled due to a lack of funding. I am opposed to Town funds being spent on an asset, when so many of the residents voices were ignored. I forgive the Town for making the mistake of offering deposits; the pier owners can keep the money. However, the Town should not go forward with a sale!!

Richard Parks

Heather Finnell

From: Wally Gantt <wallygatorgantt@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2021 9:27 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Purchase

Heather:

Please inform the commissioners I am strongly opposed to the purchase of the pier and its adjoining properties.

Wally Gantt
137 Seagull Drive
Holden Beach, NC 28462

Heather Finnell

From: Brian DeWyer <badewyer@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 11:29 PM
To: geraldbrownb365@gmail.com; woodytyner@gmail.com; vccbrian@gmail.com; Michael Sullivan; pattykwi@gmail.com; Heather Finnell
Cc: HoldenBeachPoa@wildapricot.org; jpwi10@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Please stop this 'move fast, fail in a big way' train and take a sound, prudent approach to the Pier financing and risks

To all Holden Beach Commissioners:

How can the BOC in good conscience possibly over pay for unknown property value? The seller at the very least has not been accommodating based on the notes in the meeting record signaling there is more to know. The town should have the best information - 'clear information' - available before reaching a recommendation. There is no rush to make this decision versus unknown market risk. Such as the pier is 14 years beyond useful life so what is the cost to 'possibly' survive an upcoming cat 3-4? What are plans B and C?

The 11/15 end of due diligence date should be extended until the above is known. If the seller does not cooperate to complete a full due diligence, amend the terms. The pier property will be there next year as no commercial enterprise would take it on now at 'market' rates.

As I read in last meeting minutes:

'With less than 2 weeks until due diligence closes, it is Commissioners Sullivan and Kwiatkowski's opinion that **there is still insufficient information on property value**, the pier's condition and the estimated time and money needed to have a functioning pier and building open for business. You as property owners and voters deserve to have a clear presentation of an estimated ultimate cost for both the property purchase and improvements and a fact based proposal of how it will be paid for.'

We now see the adjacent pier property will be a Dollar General. **REALLY?** A large commercial corporate entity on Ocean Blvd that sells bad food and is known as mini-Walmarts. - <https://slate.com/business/2021/07/dollar-general-food-deserts-grocery-stores.html>

The family local businesses just over the bridge are 'thrilled' by that, especially Robinson's Hardware and BeachMart. As you know there is a recent new Dollar General on Holden Beach Road on the way to Supply. I guess crossing the bridge is too far to buy some ramen noodles.

How does this fit the family beach message and tradition? Easy, it does not.

Again, Alan Holden should have recused himself from ANY of these pier transactions since there inception. Selling the land to Dollar General says it all - \$ versus what is the right business for Holden Beach.

DeWyers

244 Brunswick Ave West

Island visitors and property owners since 1985

On Sun, Sep 19, 2021 at 5:57 PM Brian DeWyer <badewyer@gmail.com> wrote:

To all Holden Beach Commissioners

At its September 4, 2021 meeting the HBPOA membership adopted a resolution to be delivered to the BOC stating that HBPOA DOES NOT support purchasing the Property UNLESS AND UNTIL: (i) all Inspections are complete and there is a cost estimate and plan for repair; (ii) taxpayers are told the plan for operating the pier, parking lot and restaurant building; (iii) taxpayers are given a realistic plan and revenue sources for repayment of the \$3.3 million of public debt; and (iv) taxpayers can see the potential impact on property and occupancy taxes.

This vote made it clear that the HBPOA does not oppose the concept of the Town owning and developing the Property and preserving the Pier, but it does not support incurring over \$3+ million public debt and obligating taxpayers without taking prudent precautions to ensure that the Town is not paying too much and/or is not taking on hidden risks and liabilities, and without knowing how the Town plans to repay that \$3+ million.

And the mayor should have recused himself long ago from participating or commenting on the town concerns or aspects of this transaction...too many times in Brunswick county we have seen perception is reality.

Slow this train down...

DeWyers

244 Brunswick Ave West

Island visitors and property owners since 1985

Heather Finnell

From: Marshall Hester <marshall.hester@rocketmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 9:05 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Property Purchase

Please inform the town commissioners that I am in favor of the purchase of the pier property by the town under the terms of the existing contract between the town and the seller.

Thank you.

Jerry Marshall Hester
Owner
125 By The Sea Drive

Heather Finnell

From: Steen Moss <steenmoss@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 7:53 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier

The town

The town SHOULD NOT buy the pier !!!!!!!

Cut your losses, forfeit for earnest money !!!!!!!

Steen Moss

Heather Finnell

From: Kip Reader <kipreader@att.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 6:08 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Purchase

We are in favor of the Town's proposed pier purchase. Ownership and control of those mid-Island parcels is prudent for several reasons, including access for the public, parking, access for emergency services, retail services, and possibly use of the pier. Although the issue has been characterized as the "Pier Purchase", we believe the value and utility of land itself is the key component.

Although there is risk involved in almost any real estate acquisition, the parcels are not likely to fall in the category of significantly depreciating assets in future years. And the property offers potential for a private/public partnership to achieve the best and highest use for the residents and owners at HB, along with the public.

We are probably in a tiny minority who would not be averse to a tax increase if that is deemed necessary for the acquisition or improvement of the property. It is in the long term interest of the Town and HB property owners for the Town to gain control of this property.

Kip + Sarah Reader. (Owners, not HB residents)
1203 Ocean Boulevard West
216/469 6616

Sent from my iPad

Heather Finnell

From: Butch Sheffield <butchsheffield49@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 3:16 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier

As along time property owner at Holden Beach on Southshore Drive and now Sailfish I oppose the pier purchase in that it will be a financial burden on the taxpayer of HB.if we looked at usage the majority will be day trippers ,the only time I have used pier was I lived on mainland.we have so many other needs storm drainage ,bike and cart paths
Mr Sheffield

--

Butch Sheffield

Heather Finnell

From: karen fleischhauer <karenathbnc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 3:00 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Sale of Pier

Please let the commissioners know we are against the town purchasing the pier.
Mark and Karen Fleischhauer
125 Lions Paw Street

Sent from my iPhone

Heather Finnell

From: laura Throckmorton <lthrock55@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 2:10 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Purchase

Please forward to the commissioners.

After reviewing the information property owners have been provided regarding the pier property, I cannot understand the rationale to purchase the pier and buildings, which miserably failed an inspection. I realize many people have emotional ties to the pier property, but saddling property owners with unknown expenditures that may or may not be covered by grants is fiscally irresponsible.

Town funds would better be spent on known needs. One such need is an additional water tower, which is more of a necessity as the island continues to have a building boom. It was disappointing to learn the water tower need was tabled so a foolhardy plan to purchase a dilapidated pier and cafe could be pursued.

When you consider the unknown costs to rebuild, insure, and operate, the purchase of the pier property should not move forward.

Thank you,
Laura Throckmorton
120 By the Sea Dr

Heather Finnell

From: susan.challenger@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 1:31 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Purchase

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to address my concerns regarding the Pier Purchase.

- Limited and incomplete information provided to homeowners
- Unknown issues regarding the cost and if grants will be granted and if parking revenue can be used to pay for the purchase, need clear outline of paybacks
- Impact on taxes

Based on these and other concerns, I do **not** feel we need to move forward with the purchase of the Pier.

Regards,

Susan Challenger
239 Brunswick ave West

Heather Finnell

From: Russell Marks <rrmarks1@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 12:22 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: pier purchase

My wife and I own 138 OBE. We strongly oppose the pier purchase. Government has no business taking over a decaying structure. In any case, there is no way to accurately calculate the value of such a property. If it is an attractive purchase, some private individual or group would have bought it.

Respectfully,

Russell Marks

Heather Finnell

From: Gaye Watanasiroch <gwatanasiroch@carolina.rr.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 9:58 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier purchase

We are owners of 687 ocean boulevard west, Gaye and Sitthisin Watanasiroch. We are against purchase of the pier and adjoining parcel.

Sent from my iPhone

Heather Finnell

From: Bill Murray <wjm320@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 13, 2021 8:51 AM
To: Heather Finnell
Subject: Comments of Proposed Pier Purchase

To the Commissioners and Mayor of Holden Beach:

As a relatively new property owner (3 years), we have been watching with great interest the proposed purchase of the pier and adjacent property by the Town of Holden Beach. It seems clear to us that from the information gathered and presented thus far, moving forward with the purchase at this time represents a potential financial liability that cannot be reasonably estimated:

- The fair market value of the property is not fully understood.
- The due diligence assessment conducted by Applied Technology & Management (ATM) showed that Immediate repairs to the pier to extend the service life for a reasonable period (10-15 years) is estimated to be \$500,000 to \$750,000.
- The building assessment conducted by McPherson Engineering Design concluded that the original section and east-side addition most likely cannot be repaired, while the west-side addition may be salvageable. From our view, the cost to build a new structure of similar form and function are not clear and represent a significant financial liability that would need to be addressed by the town.

While we recognize the potential value to the community that the purchase and restoration of the pier and property represents, it should not be pursued without fully understanding the potential tax liability (for the Town and the taxpayers) that the total cost of ownership represents to the taxpayers of Holden Beach.

Thank you for the opportunity to make our concerns known.

Bill and Anne Murray
Seahaven Too , LLC
242 Brunswick Ave West, Unit #B
wjm320@gmail.com
910-632-4522

Heather Finnell

From: jtansill830@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, November 12, 2021 3:18 PM
To: Heather Finnell
Cc: vccbrian@gmail.com; sullivm4@gmail.com; pattykwi@gmail.com; rsmith9431@gmail.com; geraldbrown365@gmail.com; 'Holden Beach POA'
Subject: Public Comment for the Board Of Commissioners Meeting: RE: Pier Property Purchase

It is truly a disheartening feeling to think there are members of the Board of Commissioners who wish to purchase the HB pier and building property without the necessary due diligence needed to answer questions regarding financing, safety concerns and future use issues. It is also disheartening to hear the BOC is ignoring the vast majority of homeowners who responded to the HBPOA survey. That vast majority do not want the pier purchased with the limited information available due to the seller's set timeline. We have heard some on the BOC state that the survey is not a definitive means to judge the homeowners' opinions. Just to be clear, we (husband and wife) definitively think the town needs to cancel this contract citing the due diligence issues already documented. Also, why is the town letting the pier owner dictate the timing of such a crucial decision? It is certainly not because he has a slew of potential buyers.

Just from watching the pier visitors over the last several years it appears off islanders make up a substantial portion of users. The minimal fees to use the pier are nothing compared to what homeowners may have to pay. And what value does the pier actually bring to the HB homeowner? If we are assessed hundreds or thousands of dollars over the next several years we can't see the pier increasing the value of a home anywhere near that.

There are developers and contractors who live and work on the island and are aware of the sale of the pier property. None of them have stepped up, either individually or as a collective, to make an offer. No other out of area entity has done so either. That should tell the BOC quite a lot. It is a money pit at least as it stands now as the BOC has shown no viable means for the property to stand alone financially. And in financially standing alone this includes all future structural repairs including the replacement of the pier itself.

Our concern is also in the processes being involved in this sale. The BOC seems determined to rush through with this purchase at all costs and risks. It seems the seller is holding us hostage to the BOC's desire to see this purchase happen and we are not seriously considering all things necessary to make an informed, educated, safe decision.

Jeff and Elise Tansill
235 Brunswick Ave W

Heather Finnell

From: tracey thomas <tracey7.thomas@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 8:30 PM
To: Heather Finnell; Gerald Brown Email; Patty; Michael Sullivan; bocmurdock@gmail.com; Rick Smith
Subject: Pier Purchase

Dear Commissioners,

I am **NOT** in favor of the town purchasing the pier.

- You were elected to represent the homeowners of Holden Beach. Based on the survey results, 85% of the homeowners do NOT support purchasing the pier property until you present a comprehensive plan of what the property will be used for, what is the impact to taxpayers, and what are the ongoing costs - none of which you have yet to produce.
- .Based on the inspection report (which should have included underwater inspection of pilings, but did not) the pier is unsafe and beyond its useful life.
- The town should not be in the business of real estate speculation - if this was really such a great deal I am confident other investors would have snapped it up. And I am skeptical of your assessment comparisons used to justify the \$3.25M price tag.

As much as you might like to imagine the survey results are skewed, there is no proof that this is the case. The homeowners of Holden Beach do NOT support this purchase - please do the job you were elected to do, which is to represent the homeowners. Do NOT move forward with the purchase of the pier property.

Sincerely,
Tracey Thomas
109 Frigate Dr

Heather Finnell

From: Dean Thomas <dthoma128@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 7:43 PM
To: Heather Finnell; Patty; Mike Sullivan; Brian Murdock; Gerald Brown; rsmith9431@gmail.com
Subject: Feedback on Holden Beach Pier and Parking purchases

BOC & Town staff,

- I do not support multi million dollar purchase of the pier and property without further due diligence and solid long term plans and contingencies.
- I do not support purchase of the multi million dollar properties near pier without further due diligence and solid long term plans and contingencies.
- Large multi million dollar expenses should be put to vote by the taxpayers at the time of standard elections.
- Brunswick County should be taking the lead on parking initiatives or at least be an equal partner in planning and costs.
- All discussions on these very critical topics should be public and not held behind closed doors (executive sessions).
- Our town should not be acting as property speculators / investors / managers.
- If the pier currently is not meeting code, why is it open for business and possibly endangering the public?

Dean Thomas
109 Frigate Dr, Holden Beach, NC 28462

Heather Finnell

From: Rick Paarfus <rpaarfus@ec.rr.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 1:02 PM
To: alan@alanholdenrealty.com; geraldbrown365@gmail.com; BOCmurdock@gmail.com; sullivm4@gmail.com; pattykwi@gmail.com; rsmith9431@gmail.com; David Hewett; Heather Finnell
Subject: Pier Purchase

Commissioners,

At this point, I cannot support the pier purchase for the following reasons:

1. The intended use for the property has not been identified, other than for parking and beach access. Block Q would be a far better purchase for parking, providing approximately twice the spaces, costs less, is more protected from the oceanfront, has bathroom facilities, and does not carry the liability of the pier structure and pier house. A beach access can be provided by buying a property that does not have the pier and pier house liabilities as well.
2. Most property owners would like to have a pier facility if it is affordable, but no such plan for keeping a pier facility, how much it will cost, or how it will be paid for has been developed/presented.
3. The estimated tax increase required to restore the pier facility could have been developed, but has not. Further, the pier inspection that was done was insufficient to assess repair costs, due to the lack of the complete underwater assessment.
4. The pier and pier house will likely be labeled an attractive nuisance/safety hazard by adjacent property owners if they are merely abandoned in place. The town may be forced to tear it down at some additional cost as yet to be identified.
5. It has been stated that the property could be held and sold at a later date, perhaps for a profit. I do not believe the town should be in the real estate speculation business.
6. The town should not go into debt to buy property that it does not have a well defined, justified use for.

Unfortunately, this purchase has not been adequately justified with regard to use, cost, and funding, even though there has been time to do it. I hate to see the pier facility go away, but there is currently no plan to save it even if it was purchased. I simply cannot support the town going into debt to purchase the property without a plan to keep the pier facility at an affordable cost.

Respectfully,

Rick Paarfus

Heather Finnell

From: Carlton Pittman <rucpitt@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 9:26 PM
To: holden@atthebeachnc.com; pattykwi@gmail.com; geraldbrownb365@gmail.com; rsmith9431@gmail.com; sullivm4@gmail.com; BOCmurdock@gmail.com; Brian Murdock
Cc: Heather Finnell
Subject: Friday's Special BOC meeting Re: Purchase of Pier and Block Q

The BOC members have asked for additional input from property owners and residents regarding the purchase of the pier, and now potentially Block Q.

PIER - The inspection reports on the pier and building change the equation. The seller has neglected the pier and building with basically zero updates, routine maintenance, and zero upgrades for at least a decade (if not longer). The property owners and residents of Holden Beach should NOT be expected to foot the bill for any purchases in such condition. I encourage you all to either walk away from the purchase, forfeiting the earnest money, OR renegotiate a MUCH lower selling price. Just the guesstimated cost to repair the pier alone should require a step back before proceeding. The fact that the inspection report on the building with it being in tear-down condition only doubles down on the need for a MUCH lower selling price. The land alone is NOT worth the current contract price to the town, regardless of how some BOC members want to spin it

I suspect but do not know, the seller knew this all along, which one only one of the reasons the seller delayed so long in returning the signed contract, as well as requiring additional \$50k in earnest money in order to extend the due diligence date. This is NOT acting in good faith to a Town that provided so much opportunity to the seller. I miss seeing Mr. Bass in the pier, and wish him nothing but the best.

The purchase of the pier IS NOT a once and a lifetime opportunity NOR is it something the town cannot afford to pass up. The parcels in question have been for sale long enough that if it were a good opportunity, some private entity would have purchased it. Also dismaying is the fact then in the close to 6 months this process has been ongoing, the BOC have offered ZERO plan for post purchase of the pier. With the condition of the pier, all it will take is one injury, or worse, and the town is likely to face legal action, particularly now that the pier inspection report is public. (Note I am NOT a lawyer and I did not sleep at a Holiday Inn Express last night.)

If the BOC insists on forging through with this purchase without renegotiating a significantly lower purchase price, those that vote to proceed are doing a disservice to the town, residents, property owners, and those that vote for you to serve the town. This is NOT a purchase the town must proceed with and is not critical to the continued success of the Town. If the seller refuses a lower price, PLEASE walk away. It will be here in a year or more and the price will be more reasonable at that time.

Also, since at least some of this is related to beach and emergency access to the beach, the town CAN invoke Eminent Domain on the current access by the campground, pay the seller fair market value for that parcel, and retain the existing access without incurring \$3million in additional debt for the town. Requiring residents and property owners to foot the bill for this purchase via higher taxes OR an assessment (as so noted by the Town Manager) is not an acceptable way to proceed with such a risky purchase. There are few other more risky parcels of land on the island than ocean front lots.

Please renegotiate a lower selling price. If the seller refuses, now that the inspection reports are public and MUST be disclosed in any other purchase of the same properties, please be willing to walk away from this purchase.

BLOCK Q

Block Q is likely a much better investment, safer, and more needed purchase for the Town than the pier. I will conditionally support the purchase of Block Q if any of you can tell me how it will be funded. If Block Q is to be purchased, how will the purchase be funded?

Are the sellers willing to sell just some of the parcels as opposed to all of the noted parcels? The triangular sliver parcel between Carolina Ave and Southshore Drive cannot be a desirable parcel. That parcel is perfect to use for boat trailer parking. (Side note re: Parking - what is expected to occur when the town implements paid parking, but the 15+- parking spots in the NC Wildlife ramp area remain free - this needs to be considered by the parking committee).

The large parcel bounded by Quinton St, Brunswick Ave E and Carolina Ave IS very desirable for the town, depending on price. That could easily be a revenue generating property for public parking, with nearby facilities not available in other areas of the island.

The other large parcel by Cole St, and Brunswick Ave W - what intention would the BOC or Town have for that property? The Town should not be in the real estate speculation business.

Other properties previously purchased for parking (300 block, 800 block) and any other now not intended to be used as originally purchased for (parking) should be sold possibly to offset costs of purchasing Block Q.

PLEASE - tell me how and or why we should support the purchase of the pier. And do not tell me it's because it is a Once-In-A-Lifetime opportunity - it is not, and that doesn't cut it for a reason to put the town and property owners in MORE debt.

Please tell me your plans for the pier. If you have none other than to let it sit there, that is a poor reason to spend \$3+million dollars of other peoples' money. There are other ways to maintain public and emergency beach access.

Please tell me how you could or would possibly pay for Block Q - in total, or in some smaller purchase.

I would like to support you all on this. However as time as moved forward, the REAL condition of pier and building made public, it is less and less a good purchase and deal for the Town and property owners.

I very much appreciate your service to the town, realize this is NOT easy, and understand you will never make everyone happy regardless of how these endeavors conclude.

I very much wish to hear from each or all of you on this, and my questions if they can be answered.

Carlton Pittman

Full time Holden Beach resident/Lifelong NC resident