



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Public Assembly. Present were Mayor J. Alan Holden; Mayor Pro Tem Ken Kyser; Commissioners Sandy Miller, Sheila Young, Dennis Harrington and Gina Martin; Town Manager David W. Hewett; Town Clerk Heather Finnell; Town Attorney Mac Tyson; Public Works Director Chris Clemmons; Police Chief Wally Layne; and Shoreline Protection & Recreation Manager Christy Ferguson.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Kyser to approve the agenda as presented; second by Commissioner Miller; approved by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Kyser to approve the minutes as written; second by Commissioner Young.

Mayor Holden requested that on page 2, line 4, ROW be amended to right-of-way and on page 2, line 44, portion be changed to portion.

The Board agreed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

No comments were made.

POLICE REPORT – CHIEF WALLY LAYNE

- It has been a weird week. Tropical Storm Ana came to visit over the weekend. It was the 2nd earliest tropical storm to make landfall in our country in history. It wasn't as bad as it could have been. It wasn't a pleasant weekend to be outside. It is better to get the storms done early. Hopefully that will be the case. Thanks we got through the first one pretty much unscathed. Typical spots on OBW took on water. It is gone by today.
- Had a few car break-ins over the weekend towards the east end. Have a suspect.
- Everything else is calm. In the process of gearing up for the season.
- Mayor Holden inquired about the one investigation listed on the report. Chief Layne confirmed there is more than one that they are working on, but the ones that make the report are the ones that have been concluded.

UNCW EAST END SEA OATS PROJECT – STEVE MERCER, NEAL CREALESE AND ZACHARY LONG

Mr. Creales explained that the idea of the project was to get sea oats growing as quickly and efficiently as possible. He reviewed the importance of dune communities, which included tourism and dune stabilization. The project was planting sea oats. They manipulated two different things. They tried different fertilizers and looked at the interaction of mycorrhizae. Mr. Creales explained the mycorrhizae and plant relationship. They set up 3,000 plants, 300 plots of 10 plants each. They used four different fertilizers, some with and some without mycorrhizae. Unfortunately, they lost most of the plants due to flooding. They did have other sites, but Holden Beach was the largest site. Mr. Creales explained the methods used to assess the results. In the greenhouse, there was giant growth with mycorrhizae, but not much of an increase in the field. They need to figure out why. Mr. Creales stated the study conclusions show that osmocote is the most effective fertilizer for early growth and the best method for planting vegetation is the one the Town is currently using.

Commissioner Young asked if Mr. Creales will still continue to share his research. Mr. Creales replied yes. He will be working on it for another semester. Lou Cutajar asked how many plants were left. Mr. Creales explained that they lost a majority of them. Steve Mercer thanked the Town for cooperating.

STATUS OF TOWN'S AGREEMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE BRUNSWICK BEACHES CONSORTIUM (BBC)

Town Manager Hewett explained the BBC has recently undergone some flux, so he wanted to see the direction the Board wanted to provide regarding continued membership. Commissioner Miller, who is the Town's current representative to the BBC, stated she thinks it was a very useful aspect in the past. The Town paid \$10,000 a year to be a member. They would get together every other month to discuss issues and common topics. Recently, there seemed to be a lot of problems. She stated she is not pushing to have the Town remain as a member at this time. Commissioner Young stated that she thinks the Town should make a decision if we are in or out because the group is attempting to reorganize. She stated from what she understands, they will not be collecting money unless a need arises. She thinks it is a valuable tool. It helped when she was on the Shoreline Protection Committee. Commissioner Young thinks it is a good way to communicate with other beach communities. She thinks it is unfortunate that someone's individual actions has ruined the group. She has attended the last few meetings, but has not spoken since she is not Holden Beach's representative. Commissioner Harrington asked if payment to the lobbyist has been made. Mayor Holden replied no. Mayor Pro Tem Kyser stated the thing we do not know is if the BBC has money in their account. Commissioner Young stated she thinks if the Town wants to know that we need to contact someone.

Mayor Holden stated he was one of the ones called to the courthouse a few weeks ago. He met with the State Bureau of Investigations (SBI). They presented where they were with the investigation. They said not to expect any results before the summer. He stated the Town hasn't received anything in reference to the findings of the SBI. An issue he has is that Holden Beach has been paying \$10,000, another island paid less and another didn't pay at all. He wasn't happy finding out that the collection of money was not even. At this time it doesn't seem anyone has any knowledge of the accounts and where they stand. He added the SBI doesn't know either. The only person who knows is the one who had the checkbook and he is not talking. We don't know if it was a misunderstanding, but we do know that the lobbyist that was retained hasn't been paid. He stated one of our neighbors paid their portion so they wouldn't be part of any future lawsuits. Mayor Holden stated he attended those meetings for a long time. He didn't attend the last few on purpose. Commissioner Miller stated that Bald Head Island has already said they wouldn't be part of the organization. We have a good relationship with them. She stated communities can talk to each without being members. Mayor Pro Tem Kyser stated he does think there is a lot to say about a collective voice. Politicians might listen to an organization more than an individual.

Mayor Pro Tem Kyser asked if the Board needs to appoint someone to represent the Town in the development of a new organization. Mayor Holden stated he has not been told there has been an official meeting for that purpose. When you are meeting under the name of one group, he finds it hard to discuss organizing a new one. Commissioner Miller stated

as a member she receives an agenda that has already been planned. Commissioner Young stated the Town was supposed to receive the workings of a new structure. Town Manager Hewett confirmed he saw it. Mayor Holden stated he is not aware of anything where people do not want to work together. The method of moving to a new organization seems to be the cause of confusion. Commissioner Young stated the new organization isn't being called anything. There is a temporary chair, vice chair and treasurer. Commissioner Martin asked if they are the same people. Commissioner Young stated there was an election to appoint these people. Commissioner Harrington agrees it is good to have numbers to voice our concerns and interests. He is not sure if this can develop into that or not. He suggest just watching for now. The Board discussed who would be appointed. Mayor Holden stated he thinks the Board is in agreement that there needs to be a collective group. The question is how to start a new group.

Motion by Commissioner Young to continue to support the group that is getting together for a common purpose, that cannot be named at this time, but support the Town attending reorganization meetings; second by Commissioner Harrington.

Mayor Pro Tem Kyser would like to change the motion to attend meetings and decide if the Town wants to join, he is afraid if support is said it could mean monetary. Commissioner Harrington stated he agrees the Town should attend the meetings before we commit ourselves. Commissioner Martin stated she is puzzled why they didn't send information out asking for participants from each island to come with the idea of forming a new organization if they are going to start something new. That way it would seem totally separate. It is hard to separate it if it is all of the same people. She stated it seems very vague what is actually going on. Commissioner Martin stated it is hard to see it as a new organization when it is attached to the old.

Town Clerk Finnell read Commissioner Young's motion.

The motion did not pass (Commissioners Young and Harrington voted for the motion and Mayor Pro Tem Kyser and Commissioners Miller and Martin voted in the negative.)

Mayor Pro Tem Kyser stated he is not opposed to supporting an organization, he just doesn't want to support it financially. Commissioner Harrington stated he would like to stay involved so the Town can decide if we want to support it at a later time.

The Board came to a consensus to stay involved.

Commissioner Young asked if someone would be attending meetings or not. Mayor Holden replied that all five of them can attend, but if it isn't a BBC meeting it is just a gathering of people.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON UPCOMING VACANCIES ON TOWN BOARDS

Town Clerk Finnell explained that there are some upcoming vacancies on the Board of Adjustment, Planning & Zoning Board and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

The Board came to a consensus to hold interviews at 6:45 p.m. on their next regular meeting date.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- Shoreline Protection & Recreation Manager Ferguson explained that she and Town Manager Hewett had a conference call with the Corps and Dial Cordy regarding the terminal groin last week. The Corps reviewed chapters 1-4 of the Environmental Impact Statement. Their overall opinion is it is a well written document. They pointed out some suggestions for the final document. The public hearing still seems to be on target for late June or early July. They expect the document to be released at the end of May or beginning of June. Town Manager Hewett stated

they are thinking they will hold the public hearing here. He stated the Town is still on track, most of the suggested information is already in the plan.

- Attended the Coastal Resources Commission meeting. The draft language for development line was introduced formally. They voted to enter the formal rule making process with the draft. The development line rules would be in addition to existing rules. At the minimum, it will be the summer of 2016 before any outcome will be made. Will be more information coming out.
- Storm Damage Assessment – The dunes performed exactly as they were supposed to, they are supposed to take the impact of a storm. There were not any breaches. Explained how the varying parts of the island did. There is a sand engine on the east end. The sand will migrate west over the next several weeks. We lost some post and rope. Public Works is working on that. The sand is in the system, it is just not piled on the hill.
- The Scotch Bonnet bulkhead is finished.
- Memorial Day is early this year. Kicking off the concert series on May 24th with the Imitations.

Commissioner Young asked if there are any more updates on sewer capacity. Town Manager Hewett stated he just received a letter on the topic. He hasn't had a chance to fully review it. Commissioner Young stated she received information about broken pavement by the firehouse. Town Manager Hewett explained that it is a consequence of having bigger trucks here. They are developing estimates on a repair. A permanent fix won't be in place until after the season is over.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

- Congratulated the Holden Beach Soul Line Dancers. They brought home the gold in the Senior Games and will compete for Holden Beach in Raleigh. Named the members.
- On Sunday morning went from one end to other and then at night went the other way. Went over his findings. No major catastrophes on the beach.
- On the way back from Oak Island on Monday, a man was pulled out of the ocean. He was in cardiac arrest and had been caught in a rip tide. Emergency crews were able to get their truck on the beach. They worked on him and got a pulse. If they didn't get the vehicle on the beach so fast, the man could be dead. That is why the Board is working so hard to get accesses.
- The Board is aware what escarpment does relating to turtles. Will keep that in mind during planning.
- Has pictures from 1958, provided history of the pictures.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Kyser

- Thanked everyone for coming.
- We have openings on three boards. If you know someone who is interested, tell them. We are always looking for people. It is a very interesting thing to do.
- Get ready for the tourists. Occupancy tax goes a long way.

Commissioner Miller

- There are designated crosswalks. If tourists see residents stop, they might get the idea. It gets very dangerous in the summertime.
- Thanked everyone for coming.

Commissioner Young

- Reminded everyone that we always can use new people on the emergency evacuation committees. Hopefully we will not need to use them. Appreciates those who are doing it.
- Looking for volunteers on all of boards, please consider that.

- Acknowledged receipt of the letter from the Holden Beach Property Owners Association in regard to the county noise ordinance.
- Pleased to see the Brunswick Avenue West near Marker 55 project seems to have worked out well.
- Asked information on the shredding event. Shoreline Protection and Recreation Manager Ferguson explained that the shred event was posted wrong. She provided information on another upcoming shred event.
- Wondered when the Board is planning on scheduling goals and budget workshops.

Commissioner Harrington

- Echoed those comments, has some things he would like to propose and to see the estimated impact on the budget. Haven't discussed having a workshop or planning meeting. A little bit disappointed. Asked how they can impact the budget if they don't have a meeting. He is concerned. Proposed calling a special meeting or coming up with dates tonight. Town Manager Hewett stated he was attempting to draft a budget for the Board's consideration and would deliver it by June 1st. Commissioner Harrington stated they haven't had an opportunity to give input and would like to have a meeting.

Commissioner Martin

- Thanked everyone for coming.
- Hoping that some will seriously consider sending in a resume and becoming a member of a board.
- Looks forward to seeing everyone at the first concert on May 24th. Hopes we have a great holiday weekend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL ITEMS

Lou Cutajar stated that in the paper there has been a lot of discussion regarding budget meetings and based on the county's reevaluation, towns are changing their tax rates. He inquired what Holden Beach is doing. Mayor Holden stated he anticipates little change. Town Manager Hewett explained how to calculate a revenue neutral rate. In order to get the same revenue, the rate would be about \$0.132. That number is subject to updates to the tax values, which are coming through pretty regularly right now. That is not a published number.

Bill Spier asked about current real estate statistics. He also mentioned the 2nd Helping Program. This is the program's 11th year. Mayor Holden stated that sales are up. It is the best market it has been in about seven years. Construction is probably the best it has been in five years. The rental market is up also.

Irvin Woods commented that the sea oats and sand fences did what they were designed to do. He stated there was some loss of sea oats. The dune by the street was not touched. He appreciates what the Town has done to keep that area viable.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Kyser to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.; second by Commissioner Miller; approved by unanimous vote.

J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

Heather Finnell, Town Clerk