



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met for a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Public Assembly. Present were 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; Public Works Director Chris Clemmons; Inspections Director Tim Evans; Police Chief Jeremy Dixon; Sergeant Frank Dilworth; and Town Attorney Jennifer Carpenter. Mayor J. Alan Holden was unable to attend the meeting.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Sullivan to remove from the current agenda items 15 & 16 and replace #15 with a new agenda item for the Discussion and Possible Action on the Draft Inlet Hazard Area Proposal; second by Commissioner Murdock.

Commissioner Sullivan said the reason he is adding this to the agenda, contrary to the position he always takes on adding items at the last minute is he was asked by a couple of members in the community to put it on the agenda so that people who wanted to speak to the subject could do so at the beginning of the meeting. In addition, a majority of the Board and staff attended a meeting at the county on December 17th which addressed many of the issues and the problems the staff recognize. He said a representative from the CRC came here last week and the room was full of residents who were in opposition of the proposal. He thought it would be a good idea to add this to the agenda so people could let the Board know how they feel about it.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Tyner to approve the last meeting's minutes (December 17, 2019); second by Commissioner Kwiatkowski; approved by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

David Plumridge spoke about Item 17 pertaining to the speed limit on Ocean Boulevard. He said this is not only a safety issue, but a financial issue as well. He read his letter (hereby incorporated into the minutes).

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR VACUUM SEWER SYSTEM #3 UPGRADE

Town Manager Hewett said Leo Green is recommending that the contract be awarded to T.A. Loving, with an associated budget amendment in the amount of \$407,088. The bid opening was held December 19th. We received three bids. The budget amendment is necessary to provide adequate funding for the initial budgeting award and contract, plus the procurement of the associated Town provided vacuum/equipment (“the skid”), in addition to the System Control and Data Acquisition equipment. Commissioner Tyner asked if the \$407,000 is above what’s in the budget. Town Manager Hewett replied yes and explained that we predicated the budget on last year’s estimate. We had some additional engineering for sound suppression evaluations and the extra equipment we needed to buy.

Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski that the Board award the contract for Vacuum Sewer System 3 upgrade to T. A. Loving as specified by Leo Green; second by Commissioner Sullivan.

Town Manager Hewett explained the budget amendment would need to be approved concurrently.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski also moved to accept the Budget Ordinance 20-01, Ordinance Amending Ordinance 19-10; second by Commissioner Sullivan.

Commissioner Sullivan said he doesn’t think anybody is happy paying \$400,000 more than what was anticipated, but we know the price of doing business has gone up considerably since we did it. T. A. Loving was the contractor that did the work on the proceeding one. He understands they did a good job and it was a seamless transition from the old system to the new one. Commissioner Sullivan said despite not being happy about spending this much money, nobody argues it is not a necessity and that we should move forward.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

POLICE REPORT – CHIEF JEREMY DIXON

- The December report is good for this time of year. Not a lot going on. The east end had a couple of cars broken into. They haven’t solved those, but there hasn’t been anymore reports and that was towards the end of January. They had a witness ID a vehicle in the area that they are looking for. It probably scared them off. If you see anything, call immediately. Crime has been low this winter. Trying to do a proactive job to keep it that way.
- Water Leaks – temperature this morning was 31 degrees. We had at least one house with a frozen pipe. It will be 29 degrees tonight. Winterize if you are not in your house and look out for your neighbor’s houses.
- Explained the vehicles that were broken into were not locked. If your door is locked, 99% of the time they move to the next one. Lock your doors.

DISCUSSION AND ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Board voted by ballot and unanimously selected Commissioner Tyner to serve as the chairman to the Audit Committee.

DISCUSSION AND SELECTION OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Board voted by ballot. Mayor Pro Tem Brown announced that Mark Fleischhauer, Tony Chavonne, Jeannine Richman and Jeff Tansill are the new members. The votes were as follows: Mark Fleischhauer, Anthony Chavonne and Jeannine Richman were selected unanimously, Jeff Tansill – Mayor Pro Tem Brown and Commissioners Tyner and Kwiatkowski and Tom Myers – Commissioners Murdock and Sullivan.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE NOMINATION OF MEMBER TO FILL ALTERNATE MEMBER VACANCY ON THE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD

The Board voted by ballot. Mayor Pro Tem Brown announced that Stu Atwell was selected as the alternate member. Votes were as follows: Stu Atwell – Mayor Pro Tem Brown and Commissioners Tyner, Murdock and Sullivan and Tom Inzerillo – Commissioner Kwiatkowski.

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION ON THE 2020 DRAFT OF SUGGESTED RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Kwiatkowski stated she volunteered to take the standard rules of procedure and add the things that were different in the Town's rules, amending them somewhat. The biggest items the Board needs to agree on are at the end about public address to the Board. She proposed the Board wait until February after they complete training before they make decisions on the document. She said questions could be emailed to her.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DIRECTIVE FOR THE TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REQUESTS TO ADVISORY BOARD OR COMMITTEES

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said this will be the third time she had this directive and example of the type of form the Board could use. There have not been public comments made. At this point, she believes the Board is ready and willing to give it a try. There has been only one discussion by another Board member with her on the form. Under the recommendation it was suggested to add *as required by the January 2020 document entitled Directive for Holden Beach Board of Commissioners' Requests for Recommendations to Advisory Boards or Committees*. She proposed that the Board approve the resolution so the Board could start following this procedure next month.

Motion by Commissioner Sullivan to accept Resolution 20-01 (Resolution of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina Concerning the Process and Format for the Board of Commissioners' request for Recommendations from Advisory Boards/Committees and the Recommendations Received); second by Commissioner Tyner.

Commissioner Tyner said he thinks it is a very good idea. What you say and what you hear are sometimes two different things. He explained he thinks the Board needs to be very crisp in what they are asking for.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A MORE FORMAL PROCEDURE FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REQUESTS FOR ACTIONS TO THE TOWN MANAGER OR ATTORNEY

Commissioner Kwiatkowski explained this is to try and capture what the Board wants more clearly so there is not confusion when they give direction to the manager or attorney. This is for specific requests for activities by the manager and attorney. She said if we start using this and find it doesn't work, they can change it at any time.

Motion by Commissioner Tyner that the Board adopt the formal procedure for Board of Commissioners' Requests for Actions to the Town Manager or Town Attorney; second by Commissioner Sullivan; approved by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE DRAFT INLET HAZARD AREA PROPOSAL

Commissioner Sullivan said the purpose of adding this to the agenda was at the request of some people who said they would like to speak at the beginning of the meeting. The Town has been involved with this since the beginning. The last day for public comments on the proposal is January 31st. He thought it would be a good time for the Board to authorize to the Town employees to do whatever they deem necessary without needing to call a special meeting of the Board.

Motion by Commissioner Sullivan that the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Holden Beach authorize the town manager and town employees to take all actions they deem necessary to prepare a response in opposition to the proposed inlet hazard area plan by the conclusion of the public comment period, which is currently January 31, 2020 and that are permitted by North Carolina law without further Board of Commissioners' approval; second by Commissioner Tyner.

Commissioner Sullivan stated this allows the staff to continue doing what they have been doing. If something arises the Board won't have to call a special meeting.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Town Manager Hewett said it may have not been well advertised, but it has been our intent for a long time to absolutely refute the Coastal Resources Commission's (CRC) new inlet hazard area rules and erosion rates as they are currently proposed. Staff, primarily himself and Inspections Director Evans have been aware of the issue for years and have been engaged vigorously with the Coastal Management staff and the members of the CRC to voice our concern over technical issues. He said we had our eyes on this issue since its epic fail in 2010, which we ardently facilitated. He can't speak for other Board members, but he is aware that Mayor Holden has expressed his concerns on several occasions to various property owners, real estate agent interests and members of the CRC. Staff has attended CRC meetings religiously over the past several years as this issue has attempted to become

formulated. Town Manager Hewett stated it hasn't been until this winter that the Division of Coastal Management has been able to articulate a real proposal when it was rolled out in earnest just before the holidays. Inspections Director Evans has personally and formally addressed the CRC at the last two meetings and vigorously inserted himself into the CRC advisory committee's dialogue to include presentations to the Science Panel on the matter. Town Manager Hewett said he updated the Board on several occasions and raised the issue at the HBPOA meeting recently. There are a host of problems with the proposal, the least of which is the manner of how it was rolled out. If it wasn't for Inspections Director Evans bulldogging the issue, the workshops at Brunswick County, Ocean Isle and Holden Beach would probably not have occurred. Staff, elected officials and property owners made up more than half of the two-dozen people there. Town Manager Hewett, Assistant Town Manager Ferguson, Inspections Director Evans and Commissioner Kwiatkowski attended the Ocean Isle workshop that probably had about 35 people there. Holden Beach had over 90 people in attendance. Congressman Rouzer's representative, Chance Lambeth, who he and Assistant Town Manager Ferguson met with for over an hour prior to the meeting, Representative Iler, five members of the Board and a CRC member were in attendance. Town Manager Hewett stated they know there are problems with the inlet hazard areas as proposed. At the other meetings, they had one person. Three people were at Holden Beach. We had proposed the county adopt a resolution in support of the Town's position. The county manager chose to write a letter. They had some scheduling issues and he thought it more prudent to go the fastest route. He has been assured it will happen before January 31st.

Town Manager Hewett stated it has been his intent all along to proceed with vigor and provide comments to the contrary regarding the inlet hazard area. He thanked the Board for clearing the way so there will be no doubt that this does not work for the Town. He thanked people for the many comments and the assistance received since the meeting. He hopes to finalize the letter by the end of the week with release of the letter to the CRC early next week, before the deadline. We are pretty close, but we asked Fran Way of ATM, our coastal consultant engineer to provide some additional coastal engineering prospective.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SPEED LIMIT ON OCEAN BOULEVARD

Commissioner Sullivan said this is another item that some of the residents raised. Mr. Plumridge spoke on it a few minutes ago. He thinks it is an issue that the Board should have some discussion on. He stated both Inspections Director Evans and Chief Dixon have information. The speed limit is 35 MPH during the season. It goes to 45 MPH offseason. If we want DOT to mark crosswalks, the speed limit would need to be lowered. It would take an extra minute to get from Point A to Point B if we have the lower speed limit year-round.

Chief Dixon explained he has done extensive research on the speed limits. A vehicle versus a pedestrian at 30 MPH has a 45% death rate. If you increase the speed to 40 MPH, the death rate goes up to 85%. The 10 MPH difference is almost double the death rate. The stopping difference is a difference of 79 feet. The time distance from Greensboro to the guard shack is 1 minute and 16 seconds. Reducing the rate to 35 MPH would make the golf carts inclusive at that end of the island. At 45 MPH they are not. Chief Dixon said there has not been a vehicle versus pedestrian in the 45 MPH zone as long as he has been here.

Commissioner Murdock said he heard a lot of people say they want crosswalks marked and asked about DOT restrictions. Chief Dixon confirmed he has heard that they would not mark them in a 45 MPH zone. Inspections Director Evans stated one of the policies for permitting crosswalks is that the speed limit cannot be higher than 35 MPH. He explained there are six criteria that need to be met. We have identified four locations. Of the four locations, he believes three are in the area that goes to 45 MPH. He said while they may approve them, they will not allow them unless they are 35 MPH. Commissioner Murdock asked if the crosswalks will be allowed if the Town lowers the speed limit. Inspections Director Evans stated based on the application, he would say yes because we meet the criteria. He reviewed the criteria we already meet. The only thing we don't meet is the 35 MPH speed. He confirmed we only have four that meet the criteria that is necessary. He explained the process. Inspections Director Evans stated he turned the information in a month ago and was told it could be a couple of months before they review it. He reviewed the criteria you need to meet. Commissioner Murdock said his question was in hopes of getting more than four. Inspections Director Evans explained the numbers need to breakdown right to meet the criteria. Town Manager Hewett stated if the Board facilitates getting the first ones done, we could enter into a discussion to talk about the seasonal population counting towards the requirements. Inspections Director Evans said he included that in the letter.

Commissioner Tyner stated he had the opportunity to have breakfast with a number of residents that expressed displeasure about it going from 45 to 35 MPH. He thinks if the Board is thinking about this, they need to get more input before making a decision. Commissioner Sullivan said the HBPOA did a poll on the speed limit. He thinks it was 5 – 1 in favor of not lowering the speed limit. After discussion on next steps, Commissioner Kwiatkowski confirmed that the Board would put it on the next agenda for simple discussion and comment.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CLASSIFICATION AND PAY STUDY AND THE UPDATED PERSONNEL POLICY CREATED BY THE MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL SERVICES GROUP

Commissioner Kwiatkowski explained this is a carryover from the last Board. She said the Board had this information since September; had two explanations since then; and had questions and answers. There are a number of items that the Board needs to take action on. She stated this was asked for by the prior Board and it was found that the classifications need to be updated and the pay ranges need to be adjusted. There were three different options that were proposed as possible ways to change the pay grades. There was a 4 - 1 vote at one point that the Board would go ahead and approve Option I, which is the preferred option by the personnel experts. Commissioner Kwiatkowski explained that unfortunately at the next meeting, two of the commissioners who previously voted yes reversed it and said they didn't want to do it at that time. She said we have class specifications, a pay plan and implementation of Option I, which would require a budget amendment if the Board puts it in place effective January 1st. There is also a personnel policy. She had some comments on the personnel policy. If people want more time to digest the policy, she would imagine it would be possible to put off approving that until next month, however the other items are rather necessary. We do have a staff opening. It is difficult for the town manager to proceed to hire when things are in limbo.

Commissioner Tyner said he was at both meetings last year and has gone through the materials. He stated he has a pretty good understanding of it and has years of HR experience at his previous job. He said he thinks the consultant appears to have done a pretty good job in designing the class specifications, pay ranges and policy. He agreed that the Board needs to adopt at least items a – d. If

nobody has problems with the personnel policy, he is okay to move forward with e. Commissioner Tyner stated it is apparent from the study that the Town needs to address the wage compression the Town has. He explained the Town needs to have a fair and competitive wage for the employees.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski referred people to pages 72 and 73 of the packets. Her opinions on the items she felt needed to be changed were never discussed by the previous Board. In the policy there is a proposal for longevity pay. This has not been in the Town. She said longevity pay is not an incentive for enhancing performance. She suggested that maybe the amount of money that would be used would be better applied to other parts of compensation. Commissioner Kwiatkowski suggested that full time employees requesting tuition assistance must have achieved at least an achieves standards evaluation. She pointed out that under vacation accrual rate there had been a change that disadvantaged some employees and that the two personal days per year should be reinstated. She suggested those be kept and that would change the days that accrued per year, but that was in line with what was done before. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said the policy proposed that days in excess of 30 days would roll into accumulated sick leave. She said her reservation with that is the Town encourages people to use vacation. She has seen it happen that when people get to a certain point, they stop taking vacation so they can roll it towards retirement. She suggested a limit be put on how much can rollover into sick leave. She proposed allowing employees to transfer no more than half of their accrued leave in a year.

Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski that the Board accept as written the class specifications and the pay plan in the MAPS' document and that we agree with implementation of Option I for pay retroactive to January 1, 2020 and approve the corresponding Ordinance 20-02, Ordinance Amending Ordinance 19-10, the Revenues and Appropriations Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020; second by Commissioner Tyner; approved by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski inquired if the Board wanted to address the items in the personnel policy tonight. Town Manager Hewett stated he discussed the suggestions with Commissioner Kwiatkowski and Town Clerk Finnell and the suggestions are palatable. They are in keeping with a modern personnel program. He reminded the Board the current policy is horribly outdated and he has no problem with pulling Commissioner Kwiatkowski's changes as recommended into the policy.

Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski to accept the personnel policy with the changes that have been proposed in the packet on pages 72 and 73; second by Commissioner Tyner.

Commissioner Tyner said he looked over the suggested changes and they seem to be very appropriate and are what you would see in a more modern policy.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON POYNER SPRUILL CONTRACT

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson stated the Town retained Poyner Spruill last year. They have been our advocates at the federal level for a year. We received the contract to continue the services and there was a price increase for the contract. In order to for us to execute the contract the monthly retainer will increase by \$750 a month. To finish out this budget year it would require a budget amendment in the amount of \$4,500.

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said there was an easement issue with the easements for the east end for the SDI-5 permit. They worked with us and the attorney at the time for lots that were underwater. They have been an advocate for federal beach nourishment funds. Part of that is the Town pulling out of the Brunswick Beaches 50-Year Project and having our own project. They worked on inlet crossing federal money and legislation to revise the least cost beneficial placement to improve our position if Oak Island wants to use Lockwood Folly Crossing sand. As far as long-term projects, they recently helped Topsail Beach. They worked for them for three years and Topsail Beach was awarded a quarter billion dollars.

Commissioner Murdock inquired if we received the study. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson replied we did not get the money for the study. Town Manager Hewett added another round of supplemental funding is coming out. The President's budget will be out in a couple of weeks. Those are the types of things Poyner Spruill would be engaging on and looking out for our interests. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said Commissioner Kwiatkowski joined her and Town Manager Hewett last March at the American Shoreline and Beach Preservation Association meeting. As part of that meeting, they do trips to the hill where they take large groups of people. They met at the Corps' headquarters with about 19 people that were from other municipalities/organizations. Poyner Spruill took a day where the Town met with our representatives and organizations on the hill, with only Holden Beach in the room. She said we plan to do that again in March if their services are continued. Commissioner Kwiatkowski added those meetings did make a difference. We had pretty good conversations with the Corps, the Office of Management and Budget, Congressman Rouzer and Tillis and Burr's staff. She said the month before the Town decided to go with Poyner Spruill she put a letter in the packet presenting why the Town should hire them. One of things she said is things don't happen in a year. The big things take time. Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked if we have more details on what costs are going up. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said just what she put in the memo; the adjustment in fees more accurately reflects the amount of work involved in fulfilling the responsibilities required for the Commission's needs and priorities. Commissioner Kwiatkowski thinks the Town is getting value for the money. When you go into something like this you go in with multiyear expectations. She said switching to someone else would not be beneficial and would be throwing money away. She doesn't like when things go up 10% in one year, but does see there is value and would recommend that the Board keep them for at least another year. Commissioner Murdock asked if the Town is pursuing the 50-Year Plan as a town or as the Brunswick County beaches. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson replied just us. Town Manager Hewett added the contract with them specifically excludes participation as the Brunswick Beach Project, they are representing just the Town. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson explained that the supplemental funds the Town went for were at no cost to the Town. If the Town does not receive approval in the next round, they may have other options at a cost or the Board can choose not to pursue those. Town Manager Hewett said that process will be fleshed out better when the President's budget comes out and after the March meeting of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association. They have tentatively calendared an update of that at the April meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Kwiatkowski to accept the proposed Poyner Spruill contract and at the same time approve Ordinance 20-03, An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 19-10, The Revenues and Appropriations Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020; second by Commissioner Tyner; approved by unanimous vote.

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL REPORT

Commissioner Tyner stated as a board, they are accountable for the Town's financial position. He said the Board delegates that responsibility to the town manager as the finance officer. As much money that we have going through the Town, he thinks it would be appropriate for the Board to get a summarized view of how the Town is doing on a quarterly basis. He knows the whole budget is on the website for people to look at, but he thinks a summarized, brief report from the town manager on how we are doing would be beneficial. He has talked to the town manager who has a report already prepared that he has presented in the past. Town Manager Hewett stated he understands this without further direction and he will be glad to comply.

The consensus of the Board is to have the town manager prepare the quarterly report.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SETTING BOARD OBJECTIVES FOR THE 2020 CALENDAR YEAR

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said the Board needs to agree on a date to call a special meeting. She explained the process the Board used to set objectives last year. She suggested that everyone provide their availability to the town clerk.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO START THE PROCESS TO DETERMINE THE TOWN'S FUTURE USE OF THE RECENTLY ACQUIRED 796 OCEAN BOUELVARD WEST PROPERTY

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said the Town bought the property immediately adjacent to station 3 in order to provide a noise buffer. When the proposal was made, staff also came up with a significant list of possible uses for the building. She stated she thinks it would be prudent to get started on deciding how to use 796 Ocean Boulevard West. She inquired if it is appropriate to handover to Assistant Town Manager Ferguson for her to work with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and decide the potential uses for the building. Town Manager Hewett suggested the Board use the new procedures and formally task it to the PRAB. Commissioner Kwiatkowski stated she can bring it to the next meeting with the appropriate request made. Commissioner Sullivan said he understands whatever can be done to that structure can only be done up to a certain amount of money; we can only do a certain percentage. Inspections Director Evans said it depends on what you want to do and the condition it is in and if it meets certain criteria. Commissioner Sullivan stated he thinks the first step is for Inspections Director Evans to do an initial inspection to let the Board know if we are in the area where it might be limited to 50%. Commissioner Tyner asked if this includes taking the house off the island. Commissioner Kwiatkowski replied if you remove the house, you remove the buffer. Inspections Director Evans said he is pretty sure the 50% rule won't affect it. Town Manager Hewett said we can get that answer and bring it back to the Board. Commissioner Kwiatkowski asked if the cost will partially depend on the proposal of what to use the building for. Inspections Director Evans stated he thinks the Board needs to decide how they want to use the structure, then bring it to his department so he can do a full review of it. He said he cannot be the designer and the inspector because it will become a conflict of interest. That's why the Board needs to put Assistant Town Manager Ferguson in charge and then bring it to the Inspections Department. It would probably then need to be put out for bids. Commissioner Sullivan stated he was hoping Inspections Director Evans could say the Town does or doesn't need to meet certain criteria and get what types of projects the Town can do for X dollars, then people could choose

from that. Inspections Director Evans said the first thing you would need to do if the Town does anything but residential is to rezone it.

Commissioner Murdock said he thought we were putting sound deadening material inside the facility to take care of noise, without it going past the walls. Public Works Director Clemmons replied that is correct. Commissioner Murdock stated he wants input, but we are talking about a substantial amount of money. He said everybody knows we need more parking. He asked why the Town bought the building. He hopes they are not all looking at doing something with the building. Commissioner Kwiatkowski said there is noise reducing that will be done in the current lift station, but it would have been more. There was still the concern about having nuisance claims about noise. The decision saved money by buying the house. It did eliminate a certain level of concern about the noise and some of the engineering challenges because of noise abatement. When the Town bought the house, staff had come up with a list of possibilities that the building could be used for. She said these are some of the things that could be evaluated. Commissioner Kwiatkowski stated we don't want to take it down because it is a sound buffer. Commissioner Murdock asked how far the next house is. Commissioner Tyner said probably 50 feet.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski will bring a formal request next month. There were some interesting ideas on what might be able to be done to the building. If none of them are attractive or the Town says it will cost too much, so be it, it is a buffer. Commissioner Murdock said his concern is if we need to keep it standing, we will need to keep it up. It will be an expense. He suggested getting the pump station running and seeing if it is needed. He would love input on that. Commissioners Tyner and Kwiatkowski agreed.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- FEMA Projects – Florence/Michael collectively are in the \$24 million range. We are working every day in the FEMA grants portal. Have received the drafts of the project worksheets and we are reviewing them. We are now on our 6th project manager since we started 15 months ago. Will be in briefing the most recently assigned one, along with the Department of Public Safety on Thursday. Hurricane Dorian estimates are now up to \$12 million. The reason it went up is FEMA requested we do additional surveys out to depth of closure. That report is now being finalized to send it. That is for Category G (beach damages). The reimbursement request for Category B (emergency protective measures to get ready for the storm) has been finalized and submitted for review and approval.
- Central Reach Project Sand Search – had bad weather that has not been conducive to running the bathymetry and doing the core borings. Surveyors need a four-day window. Hoping to get it completed soon. ATM is working on other elements of the permit while that is occurring.
- Canal Dredging Project – the working group assembled a couple of weeks ago to get ready for the upcoming budget year. As part of the process, we look at ongoing maintenance activities. The intent for the Scotch Bonnet site since day one was to re-establish it to its pre-dredge capabilities which are in priority order: a permitted primary disaster debris management area, a Public Works laydown yard and lastly a dog park. If that is not the priority the Board wishes to view that site as, they need to inform him. Working hard on making sure it dries out. Supposed to have equipment onsite tomorrow in order to attempt to keep drying the site out. We did that when Hurricane Dorian came through. We are also trying to avoid any stormwater permit violations. While we are

trying to get the site back to normal, we have to be careful with maintaining our environmental permit and monitoring program. We have been compliant throughout the project so far. You need to remember the Corps jerked the rug from under us from being able to access disposal areas for any type of dredging activities. There are other communities around here that have projects that have been held up for three years. Ocean Isle hasn't been able to get their project going and he doesn't know if Sunset Beach will ever be able to. We had an opportunity where we were able to obtain a grant through the Shallow Draft Inlet Fund that bore 2/3 of the cost of the \$1 million plus project. That was one of the management decisions made in order to make that project happen. Safety on the site is a priority. At present it is not ready for use. It is barely safe for the staff to go out there on it. Was onsite yesterday and you can see where deer are attempting to walk across it. We have it posted. Do not go out on it. It could be tragic.

- Lockwood Folly Inlet Crossing Maintenance Project – the project is moving along very nicely with placement of beach compatible sand. The discharge pipe is down to about Bendigo. Expecting it to continue moving west and last another three weeks. This is a hazardous work zone designated with signs and orange fencing.
- Christmas Trees – we were fortunate to procure about 400 leftover trees from local vendors. Right after Christmas the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from Sharon United Methodist Church, along with Mike Pearson from the Inlet & Beach Protection Board and our vegetation contractor, Steve Mercer put the trees out there. They are already starting to get buried. We got the trees for nothing, we just had to go get them.
- Brunswick Avenue Paving – designs and specs are prepped. Aiming towards contract award at the February meeting. The meeting is earlier so we may need to slide it to March. Goal is to pave the western half during the timeframe between Easter and Memorial Day.
- Town Hall Genset – Returned the rental unit to the vendor. That generator went out a couple of days before the hurricane, so we needed to get a rental. We don't have the budget for backup power. Be aware that if the transformer blows, we will need to stop business because we don't have backup power. The engineer is working up a proposal for different options that should be back at the February or March meeting. Will need a solution in place for hurricane season.
- Public Beach Accessway at 289 – construction is complete. It was CAMA grant funded. We had to provide the money upfront so we have applied for reimbursement.
- Holden Beach Chapel Repairs – Chapel is getting ready to undergo renovations in February. Received notification from the Chapel and we have a reciprocity agreement. Services will be held in the Fellowship Hall. They will need to use our facility for various meetings.
- Run HB – had over 1,000 people registered, with 776 runners who finished the race. Thanked the public for their patience. Staff is working with the race company to come up with alternate routes next year to aid in the traffic pattern.
- Upcoming Town events – February is Town's birthday celebration and closing of the time capsule.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Brown

- Had several issues that we had a lot of phone calls on. Thinks the lobbyist is money well spent. Thinks we need to stay the course a little while. Will pay dividends if we wait long enough. It is the only way you will get anything out of Washington. Doesn't think it is right, but that is how it works. Need to be willing to stay the course long enough. Called the manager at Topsail Island. He said

the lobbying group, which is the same one the Town has, was very instrumental in helping them get the money from the Corps. Let's try to be patient with it.

- Had several calls about dog parks. Not falling on empty ears; has a dog. Would love nothing more than to have a place to let Skunk loose to run. Looking at options. Town Manager Hewett is working on it. Be patient. Going to have a time that everyone can comment.
- Thinks Town Manager Hewett told him that this is the first meeting that Mayor Holden didn't make since he has been here. He is to be commended and has done a lot of great work for us. He will continue to. These are big shoes to step into.
- Good to see a good crowd. Call your friends. That is what government is about. Be heard. He hears what is being said on speed. Doesn't think a minute will kill any of us. Got a call from someone whose dad likes to take the dog on his golf cart. You are going from a 45% to 85% chance of getting killed at a 10 MPH difference. Need to have hearings and let the people decide. It is for the general public to decide. Glad to see everyone out.

Commissioner Tyner

- Received a text from the same lady. Received a few emails about the dog park. Hope some of the folks who emailed will express their thoughts under the public comments section. You heard Town Manager Hewett say we are doing the best we can, there is a priority for what that land is used for.
- Had an opportunity to go through the Town's orientation along with Mayor Pro Tem Brown and Commissioner Murdock. Started at 9:00 a.m. and it went to 6:00 p.m. If you want to learn about what is going on and what it takes to run the Town, listen to these folks talk about what is on their plates and what they are responsible for. Public Works Director Clemmons gave them a tour of the lift station at the west end and lift station 3 so they could see the difference. It was really impressive to have staff spend their time telling them what they are responsible for. These folks do a lot with the small staff they have.
- Spent part of his career at BB&T lobbying government agencies, like the federal reserve and people like that. It takes time, you have to build relationships. It doesn't feel good, but if you are not at the table when the crumbs get disbursed you don't end up getting any. Thinks needs to let the lobbying play out for another year and then see at the start of next year if we want to continue it or do something different.
- Appreciates everyone being here. This is a nice crowd.

Commissioner Murdock

- Apologized for missing the December meeting. He had a vacation planned for two years.
- Glad to see everyone. Knows it is cold and miserable.
- If you are not familiar with the inlet hazard area, he thinks the maps are still on the table in the back. Please stop and look. It is a huge area that they are adding. Knows the Board just directed the Town to send a letter, but that doesn't stop everyone from doing the same thing. Encouraged people to call anyone they know affected by this. If they get one letter it's one thing, but if they get a thousand from homeowners and people who have real estate interests here it's another. It will affect everyone if it goes through. The deadline is coming up quick. Has their emails, Braxton Davis and Ken Richardson. They are accepting comments until the end of the month. Encouraged people if they have time to shoot them something in writing voicing their opposition to this.

- Please don't hesitate on any items to email or call. He wants to hear feedback. Will try to meet any time he can. Thanked for the support with the election. Hopes he can represent the Town to the best of his ability and he will. Feel free at any time to bend his ear and tell him what you think.
- Didn't do much but spend money tonight. Having trouble with a lot of it. At some point need to generate revenue to offset that. It is a challenge. There is a lot of stuff we have to do. These are very hard decisions that he doesn't like making. Doesn't see a way around some of them. Need to figure out how to bring in some money to offset this. Will need to look at everything real hard. These are tough decisions. Had trouble with some of them tonight.
- Appreciates seeing everyone. Would like to see the middle of the room filled up too.

Commissioner Sullivan

- Wants to try to emphasize what Commissioner Murdock just said about contacting people. Found it in his career that it is easier to persuade someone to do something than it is to persuade them to change their mind once they have done something. Send something that doesn't just say I don't like the plan, but give the reason why it doesn't make sense. The simplest thing is we accrete and have accreted sand on the west end for the last 40 years. Somehow, they hold that against us when they do their computations. It makes no sense.
- Glad to see there are more people here than normal. If you look at the agenda, it helps the Board to find out how people feel before they take a vote. Don't come back after they vote and say you didn't do your homework. It is a lot easier to make a wise decision if we have the input from the people before we have to make it.
- The Town holds different social events throughout the course of the year. It is a nice thing to come to and a nice part of the Town. On February 14th it would be nice for you to show up and celebrate. Last year when we did the 50th anniversary it was very nicely done. Parks & Rec put a lot of time in. It was a nice affair. Encouraged everyone to come on the 14th.

Commissioner Kwiatkowski

- Thanked everybody for coming on such a cold day.
- Thinks right now the important thing people can do is to organize some opposition thoughts for the IHA and send them in before January 31st. The comments coming from the Town are extremely important, but we also want to hear from you. They were very impressed by the number of people that came and the number of questions they got from different people. Continue that. Let's get stuff in writing that expresses what we see is inappropriate for what they are doing. We don't just want to hear we don't like it. It won't help make the point.
- Knows it may look like she took over the agenda with all of these items. Doesn't intend to do that every month. Had a bunch of stuff that had been building. Promises will not hijack more meetings.
- Everyone get home safely and be warm tonight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL ITEMS

Dolly Mitchell said she thought she loved when it changes to 45 MPH until she listened to Chief Dixon. She never knew that we were restricted in the number of crosswalks based on the 45 MPH speed limit. She stated she didn't know until recently that if you drive golf carts after the speed limit changes you are violating the law. Mrs. Mitchell said life is a compromise and she is willing to give up 10 MPH to get more crosswalks and to be able to drive her golf cart. She said will push for 35 MPH year-round.

Jeff Hodge said the dog park is now a toxic dump and doesn't believe it will be habitable for anyone. He explained he thinks having a dog park established in another area on the island would be excellent. He stated it is a great place to socialize. He doesn't think the current one can be returned to its prior use. He would like to be put on the agenda for discussion.

Suzanne Council stated there are several people here that would love for the Town to establish a temporary dog park. She asked if the Town could tell people how toxic the current one would be. She said they miss the dog park and it is a good place to socialize. She added it was a good place to go and turn dogs loose.

Donna Bailey said over the last year she started listening to meeting audio and asked if people could speak up. She explained the consistencies in the Town over the years have been wonderful. She said she can't say enough about Mayor Holden and his insight. She said he was born and raised here and puts things in perspective. Ms. Bailey also appreciates the Police Department. She thinks the Town has fewer officers now than when she was a child. She always felt safe here.

Kerry Craig said there needs to be some kind of a crosswalk by the parking. They have seen some hair raising near misses. She appreciates the consideration.

Laura Throckmorton stated she is a proponent for a dog park. When she walks her dog at night, she gets run over by bicycles. She said there should be somewhere on the island you can locate a dog park. If it is temporary, it is fine. She agrees that she does not know what is in the spill area.

Katherine Clark said she came for the dog park issue, but wants to speak about the speed limit. She lives on the west end. 45 MPH is not 45, it is probably 55 MPH. She stated with some of the construction workers it looks like 60 MPH. She appreciates the statistics and information. She said if we can't have a crosswalk because it is tied to the speed limit, she really advocates for a reduced limit on that end.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Kwiatkowski at 9:15 p.m.; second by Commissioner Tyner; approved by unanimous vote.

ATTEST:

J. Alan Holden, Mayor

Heather Finnell, Town Clerk