

Town of North Topsail Beach

Joann M. McDermon, Mayor
Mike Benson, Mayor Pro Tem

Aldermen:
Richard Grant
Don Harte
Tom Leonard
Susan Meyer
Connie Pletl
Robert Swantek



Alice Derian
Town Manager

Danyale Lundy
Town Clerk

Nature's Tranquil Beauty

Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting Agenda Monday, December 6, 2021, at 6:30 P.M. Sneads Ferry Branch of the Onslow Public Library 1330 Highway 210, Sneads Ferry, NC 28460

Present: Mayor McDermon; Mayor Pro Tem Benson; Aldermen Grant, Leonard, Meyer, Pletl, Harte, and Swantek; Chief Younginer; Finance Officer Elliott; Town Manager Derian; Town Clerk Lundy; Interim Public Works Director John; Fire Chief Soward; Planning Director Hill; Town Attorney Edes; and Coastal Engineer Way.

Via Zoom: CPA Doug Carter.

- I. **Call to Order**
Mayor McDermon called the Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
- II. **Invocation**
Alderman Meyer led attendees in an invocation.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Alderman Leonard led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. **Approval of Agenda**
Mayor McDermon requested approval of the Agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Benson made a motion to approve the agenda. Alderman Meyer seconded. The Motion passed unanimously; 5:0.
- V. **Manager's Report**
Becker Morgan Proposal (Fire Station 2)
 - Town Manager Derian requested Becker Morgan to provide an estimated % or breakdown of the billings to determine what will be due to this FY vs next FY. They expect to provide initial services, Programming, and Schematic Design, during the period before July 1, 2022. They will hold involving additional engineering consultants until near the end of the fiscal year. Town Manager Derian brought this to the Board's attention because if you reference the total fixed fee and additional services such as Geotech there would be a

*All open forums are subject to a 3-minute limit

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Sneads Ferry, NC 28460

(910) 328-1349
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\$27,740 shortfall looking at the fees vs what is allocated. North Topsail Beach can expect to incur 25% of the \$319,700 which is \$79,925 and is sufficiently funded in the Capital Improvement Fund line item for the Public Safety Building.

DEC Associates

- The Financial Advisory Agreement with DEC Associates has been executed in the budgeted amount of \$35,000. They will be assisting the Town in obtaining a Special Obligation Bond relating to upcoming FEMA beach nourishment projects. This will include bank recommendations, negotiations on terms and interest rates, assistance in bond and closing documents, as well as assistance in working with the Local Government Commission and making presentations to the Board.

Phase 5 North End Truck Hall Project

- The bid opening was held on December 2nd at 2:00 pm. North Topsail Beach received three bids from the following bidders:
 - S.T. Wooten \$8,603,110
 - C.M. Mitchell \$10,067,675
 - S.J. Hamill Construction Co. \$16,086,247

The bids have been reviewed by Coastal Engineer Way and a recommendation is made to award a contract to S.T. Wooten for \$8,603,110 subject to the Town Attorney and Town Manager negotiating such terms and with the contract being contingent on Local Government Commission approval and permits

*Funding is anticipated to be finalized by February 3rd and a Notice To Proceed will immediately follow Local Government Commission funding finalization, which is expected February 1st. This information was provided to all bidders via an Addendum issued on the IFB. The Addendum also addressed the issue raised by potential bidders on increasing gas prices. The Town and Engineer will consider requests for variations in the state diesel price index. Any adjustments for fuel costs will be determined by the Engineer monthly through a Change Order.

- Permits – According to an update Town Manager Derian received on Friday North Topsail Beach is on track to meet the Local Government Commission deadline of January 4th
 - United States Army Corps of Engineers is processing with anticipation of being able to wrap up the Phase 5 permit in December.
 - DCM – Draft in progress and should be issued by the Engineer's estimate within the next couple of weeks.
- Special Obligation Bonds Resolution – Initial Resolution to be adopted at the January Board Meeting and Approving Resolution to be adopted at the February Board Meeting.

Northern Shoreline Dune Truck Hall Project

- The project commenced on November 16th and is still in progress. The contractor to date has completed 2,600 feet of dune fill and is expected to be completed by the end of December. The contractor will follow up on a couple of damages that occurred to cross-overs that have been reported.

210 Sea Shore Drive Condemnation

- The Administrative Hearing was held on November 16th at 10:00 am at the South End Fire Station. A written order to demolish was mailed and posted on November 22nd. The property owner had until December 2nd to appeal the order to the Board of Alderman in writing. To date, North Topsail Beach has not received an appeal nor has the owner applied for a demolition permit. The owner did contact North Topsail Beach today stating they intend to apply for a demolition permit tomorrow. Staff is obtaining 3 quotes for the cost of demolition (should the permit not be applied for) so the Board may consider approving funding and demolition at the January meeting.

212 Topsail Road

- Town Manager executed the seller documents for 212 Topsail Road. North Topsail Beach is in receipt of \$9,730.00 (\$10,00.00 less \$270 settlement charges). These funds were received Friday and accounted for in the sale of fixed assets.

Holiday Lighting

- Public Works staff installed snowflakes, décor, and lights to the two Welcome signs, Fire Station, and wreaths on the fire trucks.

COVID-19 Infection-Exposure Protocol

- Included on tonight's consent agenda is a protocol that adheres to the Onslow County Health Department and CDC COVID-19 Guidelines regarding quarantine periods and return to work guidelines for North Topsail Beach employees. It further outlines notification protocols for Employees, Supervisors, and Human Resource personnel and what actions to take. This protocol provides for Emergency Paid Sick Leave to eligible employees who qualify and outlines duration/compensation employees may be eligible for, on a one-time basis. Full-Time employees: 80 hours of pay at their regular hourly rate of pay and Part-Time employees: The number of hours the employee worked, on average, over the most immediate prior full pay period.

Town Hall Renovation

- The next Owner Architect Contractor meeting is scheduled for December 15th and the building will be ready for the final punch list/inspection on this date except for exterior front doors. The doors were reported 10-12 weeks out at the last meeting and a reminder this will not hold up occupancy.

Work performed in the last 30 days by the General Contractor:

- Interior doors installed
- Door hardware installed
- Plumbing fixtures installed
- Toilet partitions installed
- Casework completed
- Tile backsplash completed
- Remaining decking cleaned
- Gutters and downspouts installed
- Stairs refinished

Additional site work completed within the last 30 days:

- Parking lot resealing and striping with curb stops along with landscaping
- Notice To Proceed was given to the landscaping contractor and landscaping installed
- Town Hall Sign – Prefab work completed
- Received proposals for board room IT needs and gave the Notice To Proceed to the contractor for a total cost of \$34,731.01. Funds used will be from the American Rescue Funds. This will be a fully integrated system which means that the audio, video, and control systems are all seamlessly interconnected for easy and reliable control. The cost includes all equipment, installation, and staff training. The Board will have two large 75" commercial TVs mounted on each side of the room for viewing by the Board and Audience. There will be a microphone at each seat on the dais, along with a microphone at the podium. There will be controls for the Town Clerk and a set-up in the back, which will allow more than one person the availability to control from those spaces and will provide Planning Director Hill the availability to address the board if need be during future meetings. There will be speakers throughout the room in the ceiling with a Pan/Tilt/Zoom camera installed in the center. There were other options considered that did not justify the additional cost. For reference, a system with individual monitors at each station with the availability to scroll/vote on the screens was quoted in the \$85k-\$90k range.

Work to be completed between now and the first Board meeting in January:

- Interior signage installed
- Furniture delivered December 20th
- Punch list items
- Town Hall Sign completion
- IT Installation for Board Room
- Elevator Repairs and inspection

Move-in time end of December/first week of January with Open House to be determined toward the end of January.

American Rescue Plan

In March, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan (ARP) which allocated \$1.9 trillion to COVID-19 relief and economic recovery. North Topsail Beach has received its first tranche of \$118,396.10 with the second tranche expected to be received summer of 2022. Local governments have until December 31, 2024, to obligate American Rescue Plan monies and until December 31, 2026, to expend all funds. There are several categories for eligible uses that have been laid out by the US Treasury, most of which do not apply to North Topsail Beach. One that did apply was the replacement of lost revenues experienced during the pandemic.

The Treasury created a formula that measures a local government's reduction in general revenue, relative to the revenue collected in the most recent full fiscal year before the pandemic. It is an inflationary formula to approximate what the local government's expected general revenue would have been had the pandemic not occurred.

The formula calculates an average growth rate based on actual revenues for four fiscal years before the pandemic. It then compares base revenue, which is the fiscal year before the pandemic, to actual revenues and looks at what that growth factor was. If less than the average, this is where the reduction in revenue amount comes from – not an actual reduction as we had an increase in revenues during the pandemic.

Finance completed this formula which provided a reduction in revenue for North Topsail Beach for \$102,737 in 2020.

The Town is using a portion of the lost revenue American Rescue Plan funds towards modernization of IT equipment and software for the board room for Town Hall. North Topsail Beach is working on different options for the remaining amount of American Rescue Plan monies to present to the board which includes infrastructure, environmental remediation, and premium pay to essential workers. Findings and details will be relayed in the upcoming months.

VI. **Open Forum**

Town Clerk Lundy reported that no one signed up to speak at the first open forum.

VII. **South End Fire Station – Becker Morgan Proposal**

Alderman Leonard made a motion to allow the Town Manager to sign and proceed forward with the professional services proposal agreement from Becker Morgan Group. Mayor Pro Tem Benson seconded. The Motion passed unanimously; 5:0.

VIII. **Board of Aldermen**

A. **Recognition of Outgoing Officials**

Mayor McDermon read resolutions recognizing Alderman Leonard and Alderman Meyers for their service on the Board of Aldermen.

B. **Recess**

A brief recess was taken for the new officials to take their place on the Board of Aldermen.

C. **Oath of Office – New Board Members**

Town Clerk Lundy administered the Oath of Office to the newly elected officials Alderman Harte and Alderman Swantek.

D. **New Board Members seated**

IX. **Public Presentations and Hearings**

A. **Coastal Engineer Update**

Mr. Fran Way of ATM Consulting provided an update as follows:

- Phase 1 and Phase 2 Dune Truck Haul: Remaining ~1.8 miles to be completed starting November 16.
- Hurricane Florence & Dorian Phase 5 FEMA Category G: Permit application processing.
- Bid Package for Phase 5 FEMA Cat. G.
- Hurricane Dorian Phase 1 FEMA Category G: Separated from Category 5 permitting due to sandbags.
- New River Inlet Management Master Plan Environmental Impact Statement: Continued Environmental Impact Statement processing and meetings.
- Working with NTB Finance Officer and DEC Associates regarding funding for upcoming FEMA and State Grant projects.
- Completed - CAMA/DCM updates to sediment criteria related to shells and rocks. NTB sampling for the entire ~11.1-mile shoreline (per new state-wide requirements and state grant-funded).
- Sea Oat Planting will begin in the spring when soil temperatures rise. They will begin replanting any oats that did not survive and then continue planting new seat oats.
- County Beach Access.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson questioned if the Truck Haul is divided over two years and sand isn't placed until January or February, will the contractor be able to place all of the sand before Turtle Season begins?

Coastal Engineer Way responded stating the goal is to get 2/3 of the project finished this upcoming winter and following spring, then finish this specific project up the following November timeframe. The second project is set to begin around next November or December and utilize different access points from the first project. In the event, a different bidder obtains the project this will prevent the two from overlapping with each other.

Coastal Engineer Way announced the Town of North Topsail Beach received three bids. Mr. Way stated the expectation was for the project to cost around 10 million dollars. S.T. Wooten came in with a bid of 8.6 million which was great. Mr. Way reminded the Board that S.T. Wooten performed the Hurricane Matthew truck haul on Phase 5 a few years ago and the company is very familiar with the project and beach work. Mr. Way is confident S.T. Wooten will be a good fit for the project.

Mayor McDermon requested that staff ensure Mr. Way's Coastal Updates continue to be posted on the website stating she frequently refers citizen inquiries to the Town Website.

Alderman Grant wanted to clarify the financial projections after receiving the Truck Haul Bid. Coastal Engineer Way indicated that the total project cost will come to about 17 million which is coincidentally around what FEMA has obligated which is good news for the town.

- X. **Consent Agenda**
- A. **Approval of Minutes (November 10, 2021)**
 - B. **Department Head Reports**
 - 1. **Finance Department**
 - 2. **Fire Department**
 - 3. **Inspections Department**
 - 4. **Planning Department**
 - 5. **Police Department**
 - C. **Committee Reports**
 - 1. **Planning Board & PPI Committee**
 - 2. **Board of Adjustment**
 - 3. **TISPC ([link to minutes](#))**
 - 4. **ONWASA ([link to minutes](#))**
 - D. **Budget Amendment 2021-22.3**
 - E. **Budget Amendment 2021-22.4**

- F. **Budget Amendment 2021-22.5**
- G. **2021 Certified Election Results**
- H. **Resolution of Appreciation of Alderman Leonard**
- I. **Resolution of Appreciation of Alderman Meyer**
- J. **NTB COVID-19 Infection-Exposure Protocol**

Alderman Grant made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Benson seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

XI. **Organizational Items**

A. **Resolution to Adopt “Suggested Rules of Procedure for a City Council”**

A discussion was held and Town Attorney Edes suggested that staff and himself work on a remote meeting policy and update policies based on the new statutes to bring back to the Board. Alderman Grant voiced concern in not knowing exactly what current Town policies are in place and if said policies are consistent with the Suggested Rules of Procedure.

Alderman Grant made a motion to adopt the “Suggested Rules of Procedure for a City Council” to the extent they are not inconsistent with pre-existing policies that were previously adopted by the board with the caveat the board is empowered to make changes to these rules as they see fit in the future, and with the understanding that the Mayor’s duty to vote will now supersede any prior inconsistent policies. Mayor Pro Tem Benson seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

B. **Board Appointments**

Mayor McDermon requested discussion to appoint members to represent the following:

1. **Election of Mayor Pro Tempore**

Alderman Grant made a motion to appoint Alderman Mike Benson as Mayor Pro Tempore. Alderman Harte seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

2. **ONWASA Board of Directors**

Alderman Swantek made a motion to appoint Mayor McDermon to the ONWASA Board of Directors. Alderman Pletl seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

3. **NCBIWAs Board of Directors Resolution**

Alderman Grant made a motion to approve the Resolution to appoint former Alderman Tom Leonard as Liaison to the Board of Directors of the NCBIWA and to represent North Topsail Beach. Alderman Swantek seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

4. **TISPC appoint commissioner**

Alderman Swantek made a motion to appoint Alderman Harte as commissioner for TISPC. Alderman Pletl seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

5. **Adhoc Revetment Committee – appoint new members**

Tabled until January Board of Alderman Meeting.

Town Attorney Edes clarified that the present status of the Revetment Committee and the revetment work contemplated by the Settlement Agreement is due to no fault of the Town of North Topsail Beach.

6. **Liaison to Onslow County Board of Commissioners**

Tabled until January Board of Alderman Meeting.

7. **Liaison to Onslow Count DOT TAC**

Tabled until January Board of Alderman Meeting.

8. **Liaison to Greater Topsail Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism**

Tabled until January Board of Alderman Meeting.

C. **Board Resolution to Approve Regular Meeting Schedule for 2022**

Alderman Grant made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Schedule for 2022. Alderman Harte seconded. The Motion passed unanimously; 5:0.

XII. **Continuing Business**

A. **Parks and Recreation Update**

Alderman Pletl gave an update that the formation of a Parks & Recreation Committee is still ongoing. Alderman Pletl disclosed there has been some limited interest but it is slowly growing. An organization meeting is set to be held in January for all interested applicants and anyone interested in attending. The meeting date, time, and place will be announced on the town's website as well as on social media once determined.

XIII. New Business

A. **Beach Inlet Sound Advisory Committee (BISAC) proposal**

Alderman Benson presented the following proposal to develop a Beach Inlets Sound Advisory Committee:

Background: Several years ago, the North Topsail Beach Board of Aldermen established the Beach Erosion Study Team or BEST committee as it was known with the mission “Our Mission: To evaluate and recommend to the North Topsail Beach (NTB) Board of Aldermen both short- and long-term solutions that address shoreline protection and stabilization of the beaches and dunes of the Town of North Topsail Beach.” The goals of BEST were i) to reduce the potential for a storm, wave, and erosion along NTB’s shoreline, ii) to stabilize NTB’s beaches and shoreline, and iii) to establish a sense of trust and credibility within the Town of North Topsail Beach.

The BEST report to the Board of Aldermen on 5 February 2009 had the following five recommendations to the Town. These were 1) Beach nourishment and adoption of the five-phased implementation plan developed by CP&E, 2) “Pay-as-you-go Implementation. BEST supports implementing the Beach Nourishment solutions on a “pay-as-you-go” basis, avoiding debt financing of the projects. If outside funding is insufficient to fund any portion of the implementation plan, then BEST recommends establishing tax districts that correspond to the phased implementation plan,” 3) “Cost Sharing. Assuming NTB property owners would be required to fund some or all of the costs of Beach Nourishment, BEST recommends that Oceanfront (OF) property owners should contribute 90% of the costs, and non-Oceanfront (non-OF) property owners 10% of the costs. 4) “NTB Citizen Input. Beach Nourishment is not only a very expensive and challenging undertaking, but it is also not without some risk – and not without very vocal critics. It is imperative, therefore, that the citizens of NTB support the implementation of Beach Nourishment,” and 5) “Need for Long-range Plan. North Topsail Beach must develop a long-range plan to ensure that future generations do not face the same risk to NTB property and quality-of-life that threatens the Town today. NTB should consider enlisting the assistance of North Carolina State University’s “Natural Resources Leadership Institute” in helping develop a long-range plan.” Here is the link to the BEST report on the town website.

Current Status and Need. The town implemented phases 1 and 5 of the BEST report recommendation for beach nourishment but with money financed rather than the ‘pay-as-you-go approach recommended by the BEST committee. The town is pursuing a hardened structure at the New River Inlet to collect a portion of the migrating sand from the down-drift

current before it can go back into the inlet. This will slow the rate of severe erosion at the north end for the first 2000 ft or so of shoreline as well as reduce the number of yearly-maintenance dredging cycles needed in the inlet by the Army Corps of Engineers. Since the BEST committee reported its recommended goals and objectives in 2009, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen as a whole now serve as the town's beach committee along with the town manager. Recently, the town contracted with ATM, a coastal engineering firm, to facilitate Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Dorian storm-damage recovery through FEMA. The FEMA Cat B dune restoration work in Phases 2-4 should be completed before January 2022. The FEMA Cat B beach restoration in Phase 5 should start by the end of January 2022.

As the board of aldermen has a wide-ranging responsibility to the citizens of N. Topsail Beach, the time the board can spend on beach nourishment plans is limited during our monthly board meetings. The few attempts at special meeting workshops to develop a comprehensive beach plan in the past few years have not produced a way forward and have come to frustrate some of the aldermen in terms of lack of progress. Hurricane Florence has only compounded our beach nourishment efforts and long-term beach plans.

Planning for beach nourishment is only one component of the dynamic of the coastline around our island town, the other two being the New River Inlet and sound side along the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. As experience has taught our board as well as previous boards, inlet management must be tied to beach nourishment. The town took the lead in establishing the New River Inlet Stakeholders group that meets in conjunction with the quarterly meetings of the coast-wide stakeholders participating in the Shallow Draft Inlet MOA between the state and Army Corps. Onslow County, although a participant in the NRI stakeholders group, has provided little leadership or monetary commitment to inlet management. Even though the Army Corps focus for shallow draft inlets is navigation, municipalities can also benefit when beach-compatible dredge spoils are disposed of on our beaches.

Since the BEST report, there have been several changes in how towns and counties can fund beach nourishment. The State Legislature passed a Shallow Draft Navigation Channel Dredging and Aquatic Weed Fund based in part on fuel tax to support dredging of inlets for commercial fisheries and recreational access to the ocean. For a Tier 2 county, Onslow County dredge projects require a local 33 -67% match with state funds. Normally the local match is split 50-50 between county and municipality. As recently as this summer the Shallow Draft Inlet fund had \$40 million available with about half of that amount already committed to approved inlet dredge projects. More recently, based on a

recommendation from the state-sponsored, Beach and Inlet Management Plan (BIMP) update, the State Legislature approved a 'Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund' but did not appropriate funds for 2017. In 2018, diligent work by our state coastal representatives in Raleigh resulted in a one-time fund transfer of 5 million dollars to this fund. In response to Hurricane Florence's recovery, the state marked \$18.5 million for the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund as part of the hurricane recovery funds 2018-2019. Currently, the legislature's proposed state budget for 2021-2023 includes \$40 million in one-time funding for the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund. This fund would require a 50-50 state local match. Any comprehensive beach nourishment plan for N. Topsail Beach should be centered on these two sources of state funds.

While the causes of sea-level rise continue to be debated, old-timers on the island will tell you that sound-side flooding has become more severe in the past decade. Our board has given little or no attention to this issue other than an acknowledgment in our CAMA Land Use Plan and by following the CAMA setback and wetland rules. Marsh sills were approved by the state in the last few years. An adaptation of the marsh sill known as 'Living Shorelines' has become the 'thing' right now in coastal management and our town should be exploring how to adopt some of these guidelines into our overall approach to sound-side flooding. Topsail Beach has a chartered, Beach, Inlet, and Sound Committee (BIS) that meets monthly to consider issues related to the coastline around their town. The committee has a citizen Chair, two additional citizen members, and two Town Commissioners with their town manager and coastal engineer as liaison to the committee. This model has worked well for their community.

Topsail Beach completed a major beach nourishment event two years ago. Immediately before Hurricane Florence, they had plans to construct a new berm ocean side of their frontal dune for storm mitigation. They found that their private project in conjunction with the state's Shallow Draft Inlet program was more economical than their approved federal project and thus declined to proceed with their federal project. Can the Topsail Beach BIS model work for NTB?

Action items

- Establish a Beach, Inlet, and Sound Advisory Committee (BISAC).
- Approve the proposed draft BISAC Charter.
- If a committee is established then:
 - Put out a call for citizens to apply as committee members.
 - Appoint the chair and six other members plus the ex officio members to the BISAC.
 - Charge the committee to work toward the goals that are outlined in the BISAC Charter.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson made a motion to establish a Beach Inlet Sound Advisory Committee. Alderman Swantek seconded. The Motion passed unanimously; 5:0.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson made a motion to accept the provisional Charter, and the new committee will present an updated Charter within 90 days of the first meeting of the committee. Alderman Swantek seconded. The Motion passed unanimously; 5:0.

B. NTB Reach 5 North End Truck Haul Bid Award

The bid opening was held on December 2nd at 2:00 pm. We received three bids from the following bidders:

- S.T. Wooten \$8,603,110
- C.M. Mitchell \$10,067,675
- S.J. Hamill Construction Co. \$16,086,247

*Funding is anticipated to be finalized by February 3rd and an NTP will immediately follow LGC funding finalization, which is expected February 1st. This information was provided to all bidders via an Addendum issued on the IFB. The Addendum also addressed the issue raised by potential bidders on increasing gas prices. The Town and Engineer will consider requests for variations in the state diesel price index. Any adjustments for fuel costs will be determined by the Engineer monthly through a Change Order.

Town Manager Derian announced that the North Topsail Beach Reach 5 Truck Haul Bid was set to be awarded to S.T. Wooten Corporation with a total project cost of \$8, 603,110.00

Alderman Swantek made a motion that North Topsail Beach award a contract to S.T. Wooten for \$8,603,110 subject to the Town Attorney and Town Manager negotiating such terms and with the contract being contingent on Local Government Commission approval and permits. Mayor Pro Tem Benson seconded. The Motion passes unanimously; 5:0.

C. Resolution to Suspend Paid Parking

Alderman Pletl presented the following proposal to temporarily suspend paid parking at North Topsail Beach:

Background: The town of North Topsail Beach began implementing paid parking at its public parking lots and banned parking on side streets and right-of-ways on March 1, 2021.

This has brought in much-needed revenue for the town from day-trippers and visitors, who generally do not contribute other forms of revenue, such as taxes and accommodations taxes, as do the property owners and vacation renters.

However, it has also placed a burden on residents and property owners who have small driveways and limited parking, and also do not have public parking anywhere nearby. These people are unable to have family, friends, and visitors at their homes because there is nowhere for them to legally park.

While paid parking and eliminating side street and right-of-way parking has benefited our town by bringing in revenue and controlling where vehicles can park, it has done so at the expense of those who live here and has severely limited their enjoyment of life here in the town.

Before paid parking/no side street and right-of-way parking, residents and property owners with limited parking used the side streets and right-of-ways at their homes. In prior decades this was not a problem; however, when the pandemic began in 2020, we saw an unprecedented number of people visiting our town and, during the peak summer season, parking along almost every street, sometimes to the point that it might have been cumbersome to get an emergency vehicle down those streets if needed.

I am asking the board to suspend paid parking and to allow side street and right-of-way parking throughout the town of North Topsail Beach from December 7, 2021 to January 2, 2022 to allow residents and property owners to have ample parking so that they can invite family and friends to their homes for the holidays.

I do not believe the suspension will cause an unsafe level of parking on the side streets and right-of-ways because the vast majority of those who are here to just visit the beach will park in the more desirable, and closer, public parking areas. The side street and right-of-way areas will likely be primarily parked by those visiting residents and property owners.

Additionally, areas of concern that have always been No Parking should remain so during the suspension.

A positive secondary result in suspending paid parking throughout the town of North Topsail Beach and allowing side street and right-of-way parking at this time is that it will show the town's goodwill to the county, its residents, and others through the holiday season.

Mayor McDermon stated her recollection of implementing paid parking wasn't revenue-driven instead was directly related to parking issues on the south end of town. Parking in the right of way was causing issues for Emergency Vehicles to pass through which led to safety concerns.

Alderman Grant voiced concerns. One being North Topsail Beach has a contract with a third-party vendor for 12 months and in the event, paid parking is suspended it would cut into the timeframe established within the contract. Alderman Grant also pointed out that the money obtained from paid parking comes from third parties visitors, and every dollar not obtained via paid parking comes out of the pockets of the town's residents to make up for the loss. Alderman Grant did offer an alternative of when visitors come stating Town Hall can be called and made aware. Residents can provide license plates of visitors, and get a temporary pass from the town allowing visitors to park for a specific amount of time after the town verifies it causes no safety concern.

Alderman Pletl made a motion to approve the Resolution to Suspend Paid Parking. Mayor Pro Tem Benson made a new motion to approve the Resolution to Suspend Paid Parking with the amendment to leave paid parking in place and suspend side street parking only except for New River Inlet Road and Island Drive. No one seconded either motion. The Motion failed to pass for lack of consensus.

XIV. **Open Forum**

Town Clerk Lundy reported that Rebecca Dickson signed up to speak at the Open Forum. Mrs. Dickson voiced her concern regarding suspending paid parking due to the town having a contract with the parking vendor, acknowledging some people have already paid a yearly fee for an annual parking pass and voiced safety concerns regarding parking in the right of way.

XV. **Attorney's Report**

Town Attorney Edes stated he had information to be discussed in close session, and he congratulated the new Aldermen on their positions.

XVI. **Mayor's Report**

Mayor McDermon welcomed the new and returning board members. Mayor McDermon thanked the outgoing Aldermen for their service, and wished everyone a Happy Holiday!

XVII. **Aldermen's Report**

Alderman Grant wished everyone a Merry Christmas and thanked Town Manager Derian and staff for all of their hard work and progress made.

Alderman Swantek wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mayor Pro Tem Benson disclosed at the Shoreline Topsail Island Commission Meeting held the previous Thursday they discussed grant programs involving Coastal Communities. Mayor Pro Tem Benson encouraged the town to take advantage of any state grant money that may become available. The committee also discussed goals that will be posted on the Shoreline Protection website after the upcoming January meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Benson expressed his delight in the work done to the town sign, and his excitement to get moved back into Town Hall.

Alderman Harte stated he looks forward to working with the board, to help benefit all Phases of North Topsail Beach 1-5, and Merry Christmas to all.

Alderman Pletl thanked everyone for attending, expressed gratitude for the outgoing board members, and welcomed the new board members. Alderman Pletl express her delight in the work being done with the sand truck haul and gave special thanks to the town employees and staff for keeping the town running. Alderman Pletl wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

Alderman Swantek made a motion to enter into Closed Session for the matters to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. Alderman Grant seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

XVIII. **Closed Session:** To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged.

Alderman Grant made a motion to come out of the closed session. Alderman Swantek seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Mayor McDermon reported no action was taken.

XIX. **Adjournment**

Alderman Swantek made a motion to adjourn. Alderman Harte seconded. The Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

End of December 6, 2021 Minutes