

# Town of North Topsail Beach

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

Aldermen:  
Richard Grant  
Tom Leonard  
Susan Meyer  
Richard Peters



David J. Gilbride  
Town Manager

Sherrie L. Hancock  
Town Clerk

## Nature's Tranquil Beauty

Board of Alderman  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes  
March 4, 2021  
Sneads Ferry Library  
1330 NC Hwy 210  
Sneads Ferry, NC 28460

Attendees: Mayor McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem Benson, Alderman Grant, Alderman Meyer, Alderman Leonard, Town Manager Gilbride, Town Clerk-Ms. Hancock, Chief Younginer, Chief Soward, Town Finance Officer- Caitlin Elliott, Public Work Supervisor- Scott Anders, Town Planner- Deb Hill.

**I. Call to Order –**

Mayor McDermon called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**II. Invocation-**

Invocation was led by Alderman Leonard.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance-**

**IV. Approval of Agenda-**

**Mayor Pro Tem Benson** requested that several items be tabled.

- 1) CAMA Land use plan.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes from the Feb.4,2021 BOA Meeting.
- 3) Federal/Core Project.

**Alderman Leonard** requested that we add under New Business the upcoming NC Byway Conference Sponsorship.

Approval of Agenda as presented with the above chances. Motion was made by Alderman Grant, Seconded by Alderman Meyer, Vote passed 5-0.

**V. Managers' Report-**

**USACOE Federal Project**

The Corps is waiting for the approved PPA to be returned to the regional office in order to secure signatures from both ourselves and Surf City. Corps personnel visited Topsail Island February 24<sup>th</sup> to verify parking requirements have been met in both North Topsail Beach and Surf City.

**Capital Improvement/Fire Station**

Becker Morgan personnel visited the Fire Station on Wednesday, 2/23 to begin collecting info for the feasibility study. Questionnaires have been provided to Chiefs Soward and Younginer for completion.

### **Revetment**

No update ... the Town Attorney was asked to contact Mr. Forman, the project engineer, to discuss our requirements for a “hold harmless” protecting the town from any litigation between the engineer and the design contractor he employed. Mr. Benson pointed out that it may not be best to move forward at this time since the natural accumulation of sand has now substantially buried the sandbag revetment.

### **Town Hall**

Work on the Town Hall began on Monday of the week of the 15<sup>th</sup>. While the contractor indicated that roof work would be first, they began indoors, with the first week bringing electrical demolition, rewiring, preparation to remove HVAC units, and some additional demolition work beneath and inside of the building.

**Florence Project-** The truck haul has been underway for weeks on the dune restoration project. Work started at approximately 4400 Island Drive and is proceeding rapidly north. A second group has started to the north, around the pier, and is working south. When this section is completed (in approximately two weeks) they will move to an access north of the pier, begin at the extreme ends, and work toward the access. The project is moving rapidly, and so far, resident feedback has been positive.

### **Covid19**

Exposure to an active Covid 19 case required the Town Hall to be shut down on Monday, 2/22. All employees have been tested and required to provide proof of a negative test before return to work. Town Hall remains closed to the public except by appointment.

### **Onslow County**

Correspondence indicates that CAMA has found that alterations to the County’s plans for the renovation of their building have negated the requirement for a CAMA permit. There are now no obstacles to the completion of the work by the county.

### **Corps of Engineers: ICW Crossing and Channel to Jacksonville Dredging Inlet Dredge**

Dredging has resumed on the north end, and according to the USACOE the contractor, as of 2/26/21/s within 100’ of the 4,000 ft placement area. It is not possible to guess at just how much sand will be placed as part of this project.

**Corps of Engineers; Terminal Groin-** Added documentation.

Senator Brown,

Thank you for agreeing to take the time to meet with the North Topsail Beach Town Manager, Steve Foster, and myself. I

had contacted Connie Wilson earlier while you were in Raleigh to meet there if it were convenient for you back then.

Connie will be joining us on Monday.

The purpose of the meeting is to brief you on our present and on-going plans to restore our beaches and to fix the serious

erosion problem adjacent to the New River Inlet shoreline, to make you aware on how the town plans to use the state.

appropriations that you were so helpful in obtaining for the town, and to inform you on how the town is collaborating with.

County officials, State agencies, the members of the Topsail Island Shoreline Commission (TIPSC), the USDA, and us

U.S. Senators Tillis and Burr and U.S. Congressman Jones in pursuit of our mutual goals.

As you are aware, we are a beach town with unique problems. We have developed properties adjacent to an inlet that

requires special attention and engineering action, we have more than 11 miles of shoreline, and two-thirds of our town is

hampered by federal CBRA. Our developing town inherited these problems when it incorporated in 1990.

We did a Phase 1 project in 2011. This project restored 1.5 miles of beach at the north end of town.

Unfortunately, the 0.5

miles of beach adjacent to the inlet continue to have a high rate of erosion and it has been concluded that only a terminal

groin will solve problems there. We have a contract with an engineering firm to obtain a permit to allow the town to build

this structure. The 4Q 2019 is the forecast date for obtaining this permit.

We also did a Phase 5 project in 2014. This project restored 3.5 miles of beach at the south end of town.

This was a \$16M.

project financed with a loan from the USDA. The loan was possible because the south end of town was outside of the

town area controlled by the federal CBRA. The town is required to hold \$4.5M in a reserve account to guarantee this

loan. The restored Phase 5 beach is a beautiful asset to the town and is a good example of what the town wants to

accomplish elsewhere. This beach qualifies as a FEMA engineered beach. Therefore, FEMA will pay to restore this

beach at their cost for any damage caused by a major storm event.

To restore all the beaches inside NTB requires that we develop and execute a new engineering and financial plan.

We have an RFQ to hire a new engineering firm to coordinate present ongoing engineering activities, there are several of

those, and to formulate and project manage all future activities. The future activities involve the terminal groin, permitting

of sand sources, preparing specifications for the bidding and contracting for construction.

To pay for the above requires that we have a financial plan acceptable to the NC LGC (Local Government Commission), necessary loans from banks and/or government agencies, and cost sharing from the state and county who

use and financially benefit from our efforts and beach assets.

To satisfy the LGC, we need to restore our General Fund Balance Reserve to former levels. The goal is to have a

\$4.5M Restricted Fund Balance. This amount of reserve should be sufficient to meet the requirements of the LGC.

and the USDA. Now our Fund Balance is less than \$1.5M. To meet our goal, we plan to ask the State to

release to us the \$2M recently appropriated for North Topsail Beach Storm Damage Mitigation. We plan to meet with the appropriate State Agency folks on March 13th. These dollars will replace the dollars taken from our General Fund.

Reserve necessary to take Phase 1 corrective engineering action and build a seawall revetment to protect north end.

residential properties from further shoreline erosion. The remaining dollars needed to restore the full amount of \$4.5M will.

come from reserves in our beach capital fund.

The next beach project is our terminal groin/ Phase 2 project. We expect to get permits by no later than 4Q2019.

Hopefully, we can do construction during 1Q2010 or before. Besides building a groin to protect the north end shoreline.

beach and residences, our permit will allow us to dredge a wide and deep channel (500 feet wide and 16 feet deep)

initially and recurring every 4 years after. Once the groin is built this dredged channel which will be of direct benefit to

3/4/2021 Gmail - Our Joint Meeting Monday 11:30 AM

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1?ik=00d8f5de1d&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1594048412929721269%7Cmsg-f%3A15940484129297...> 2/2

Onslow County will be open for boat navigation and free from future shoaling concerns. The sand dredged from the inlet.

will be used to replenish sand losses from our earlier Phase 1 project and to newly renourish approximately 1.5 miles of

our Phase 2 neighborhood. Once this Phase 2 project is completed the town will now have 6.5 miles of renourished

beaches and will have permanently stabilized and protected the New River Inlet shoreline. A major accomplishment.

The costs for construction of this project (groin and inlet dredging) are estimated to be \$12M. (\$6M for the groin and \$6M

for the dredging). The town has state appropriated funds of \$1.5M towards this project, the state share for dredging costs.

is 67%, and the potential exists to obtain a USDA loan to cover the remaining costs of construction. The estimated loan

would be in the amount of \$6.5-7.0M. We may need Onslow County to guarantee our loan with USDA. This loan

guarantee would not require County funding. Similar to the town's Phase 5 project built with USDA loan dollars, we

guarantee our loan with our General Fund Reserve Account.

Locally, the USDA has given verbal support for our efforts to obtain an additional USDA loan for this groin/ Phase 2.

project. However, to qualify for such a loan, the town must be successful in its present efforts to be removed from the

restrictions imposed by CBRA. Senators Tillis and Burr and Congressman Jones have both initiated federal legislation.

(S.B. 1745 and H.R. 4692) to remove these restrictions. Alderman Tom Leonard and Mayor Dan Tuman will be in D.C. the

week of March 18th to meet with our legislators and their staff and the staff of the Senate and House subcommittees to

move this legislation forward. I have made it clear to our town lobbyist in D.C., former Congressman Mike McIntyre, that we

need legislation passed this year.

We plan to meet with the Onslow County Manager shortly to discuss mutual plans of assistance. We are requesting that.

they cover our annual beach maintenance costs. These amount to \$350K annually. In return, we will cover the costs of

the groin and the dredging of the New River Inlet once we have the permits.

The economic value of NTB to Onslow County and the State is huge. Unlike other municipalities, the town is almost

exclusively a resort-oriented business with 85-90% of our residential structures dedicated for year-round tourist related

purposes. This tourism business generates substantial income that is transferred to the County and the State. In addition,

this tourist business creates many local jobs and has created economic growth opportunities for the adjacent off island

communities. A side benefit is the available and easily accessible ocean beach for recreation for all Onslow County and

neighboring residents "free-of-charge"

The Town Staff and the Town's Elected Officials manage this enterprise. It is hard work and there are many challenges in

developing and maintaining this business to its full potential. We believe that we can do the job and are grateful for

legislative and financial support from Onslow County, the State of North Carolina, and the U.S. Government.

Dan Tuman, Mayor, North Topsail Beach

According to Mickey Suggs the Corps will conduct a Facebook Live event for the stakeholder's comments on the groin. This will occur in Mid-March. Mr. Suggs has already communicated with Fran Way to ensure that Fran understands the need to appear in person for the event.

### **Paid Parking**

Paid Parking is on target for a 3/1/21 rollout. The Surf Cast app is live and has been receiving a lot of activity. Our contracts are now in place.

Town Manager Gilbride spoke about possibly leasing or buying a vacant lot From Mr. Chestnut for Parking. Each Alderman and Mayor were asked about this option.

**Mayor McDermon**- Was not in favor in side street parking. She said she would be interested in the lease option. Mayor McDermon Asked Town Manager Gilbride to talk to Mr. Chestnut.

**Alderman Meyer**-Said She agreed with Mayor McDermon about the parking issue. She stated the Town's motto is "Natures Tranquil Beauty."

**Alderman Leonard**- Not in favor of side street parking. He stated he felt if parking were allowed on side streets it could be a huge mess and destroy residents landscaping.

Alderman Leonard asked if the core has talked about actual parking spaces?

How do they determine parking spaces? Suggested that staff work to get lease parking.

**Alderman Grant**- Not in favor of side street parking. He said if side street parking were allowed people would be parking everywhere and this could be potentially an issue for EMS, Fire and Police.

**Mayor Pro Tem Benson**- Spoke about the No Parking signs being a requirement for the project. He said he is not in favor of side street parking as well.

### **Budget**

Preliminary budget figures have been developed, and department managers are prepared to address their requests and recommendations at the Board Planning Retreat which will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

### **Capital Grant**

I have submitted a Capital Grant request to Onslow County for assistance with the upgrade of the Town Hall ID sign to an electronic message board to assist in communicating hazards with the many visitors we receive each year, and our residents as well. \$28,488.75

### **Tourism Grant**

I have submitted a Tourism Grant request to Onslow County in the amount of \$125,000 to provide funds for beach operation and maintenance.

### **160D – Unified Development Ordinance**

Revisions to the Unified Development Ordinance are required by June 30, 2021. This massive project is underway, and I want to recognize Deb Hill's efforts to rewrite this ordinance.

### **Town Park Dedication**

The ceremony naming the North Topsail Beach Town Park the "Richard C. Peters Park" was held on Tuesday, 2/23 with Mr. Peter's family and friends in attendance. I would like to thank the members of the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, and the Police for working so hard to make this a smooth running, memorable event. I would also like to thank Alderman Leonard for his efforts in putting this tribute together, and Alderman Benson for his kind comments at the presentation. I believe the Peters family enjoyed the event and appreciated the town's recognition of his 17 years of selfless service to the people of North Topsail Beach.

Board Retreat Dates were determined at this meeting- set for March 24th & 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **VI. Open Forum- N/A**

### **VII. Public Presentations and Hearings-**

Coastal Area Management Act Land Use Plan (CAMA LUP)

Motion was made by Alderman Grant to open the hearing up, Seconded by Alderman Leonard, Vote passed 5-0.

Mayor McDermon reminded Ms. Hill that this item was just being reviewed for cleanup.

**Mayor Pro Tem Benson**-Stated that he had reviewed the revised document. he made mention that he was pleased to see the land use plan and coastal resiliency had been cleaned up. His other concern was that the document had strong enough conservation so there could be no development in the marshes.

Ms. Hill said she understood the concern on the wetlands. However, she said that she had questions on if the property passed the requirements, she felt like she did not feel like she had clear direction. She consulted with the Town Attorney Mr. Edes.

**Mayor Pro Tem Benson** asked if in future boards could come in and rewrite the land use plan? Asked if we could write in a condition for land use.

**Mayor McDermon** said this could happen at any time. This is not what we do. We could put something on our web site.

**Alderman Leonard** stated that we should worry about something that may happen years from now. Again, this is something that may or may not be re written.

**Alderman Grant** said he got very nervous when it come to taking of land. And does not believe this is something we should hold people to. Maybe we could put something on our web site.

**Alderman Meyer** - Agreed that we should not write this condition in.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Alderman Leonard. Seconded by Alderman Meyer vote passed 5-0.

Motion to approve the updated agenda made by Alderman Grant, Seconded by Alderman Leonard, Vote passed 4-0

### **VIII. Consent Agenda**

**A. Approval of Minutes/ February 4, 2021-** Board asked Town Clerk to rewrite the Alderman's Report. To be approved at the next BOA Meeting.

**B. Dept Head Reports-**Aldermen fine with Dept Reports.

Motion to approve agenda as modified by Alderman grant seconded by Alderman Grant, vote passed 5-0.

### **IX. New Business-**

1) Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Staff request that the board approve the resolution presented in this packet on page 49 in packet.

Motion was made by Alderman Meyer, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Benson, vote passed 5-0

2) The Ordinance adopting the 2018 NC State Building Code: Fire Code

Staff request that the Board approve the Fire Code as amended.

Motion made by Alderman Grant, Seconded by Alderman Meyer, Vote passed 5-0.

3) Beach Enhancement

Mayor McDermon spoke with the board about the possible of placing Doggie Bags at the Beach Accesses. Maybe the big Parking lot.

There was discussion on the idea of Flags at the entrance into Town Limits.

Town Attorney Edes recommended that we do "Public Awareness".

Board agreed this item needed more discussion at the Board Retreat.

4) Use of Phase 2 Grant- Board agreed that they would talk about this item at the Board Retreat.

5) NC Byway Sponsorship

Alderman Leonard spoke to the board about this event and the need of sponsorship. This is something that we have done in the past. Alderman Leonard asked the Board if we could do the silver level sponsorship as we did last time. (\$1000.00). The Board unanimously agreed that we should attend the meeting and move forward with the silver sponsorship. Motion was made by Alderman Grant, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Benson, Vote passed 5-0.

**X) Continuing Business**

**A. Town Financial Planning**

1. Resolution Related to LGC Contract- No Update at this Meeting.
2. Financial Plan for USDA and Corps Project- No Update at this Meeting.

**B. Capital Improvement Update –** Mayor Pro Tem Benson said that they are trying to get some estimates on the cost of the new public safety building. Town Manager Gilbride covered most of this in his report.

**C. CBRA Update -**Alderman Leonard stated that he wished he had more to report.

**D. Town Hall Update -** Town Manager Gilbride covered in his report.

**E. Truck Haul Project Update-** Town Manager Gilbride covered in his report.

**F. Paid Parking-** Town Manager Gilbride covered in his report.

**X. Attorney's Report-**Town Attorney Edes mentioned that he had spoken with Senator Lazzara regarding the vote.

**XI. Mayor's Report-** Mayor McDermon wanted to remind everyone that the board retreat is going to be March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-4:30. This event is to be held at Sneads Ferry Library located at 1330 NC Hwy 210 Sneads Ferry NC 28460. Mayor McDermon thanked Alderman Leonard for everything he did to honor Alderman Peters and his family. She also mentioned the Fund raiser at the Fire Dept.

**XII. Alderman's Report-**

**Mayor Pro Tem Benson-** Spoke about Shallow Draft Fund, TISPC, Coastal Resource Meeting. And the Beach Management Plan.

**Alderman Leonard-** Thanked staff for there hard work and help for Alderman Peters and family Dedication at the park. Alderman Leonard also spoke about the 18 soldiers that died in Iraq. He also mentioned them during the opening prayer. Alderman Leonard closed with mentioning the NC By way Sponsorship Silver status (\$1000.00) to this event and spoke about the upcoming meeting. Motion was made by Alderman Leonard to attend and Sponsor event, seconded by Alderman Grant vote passed 5-0.

**Alderman Grant-** Thanked Alderman Leonard and Town Staff for their work done for Alderman Peter's park dedication. Alderman Grant also stated that he has had contact with citizens that are in favor of paid parking.

**Alderman Meyer-** Spoke about having movies in the park. Possibility of joining with the county to help reduce the cost. There is also a grant that is available through the county that she is working on. Alderman Meyer also thanked the Town Clerk (Sherrie Hancock) for her help with this event.



- XIII. Closed Session to discuss personnel matters-** Motion was made to enter in to closed session by Alderman Leonard, Seconded by Alderman Meyer vote passed 5-0. Motion was made to close session by Alderman Leonard, Seconded by Alderman Grant, Vote passed 5-0. No action was taken.
- XIV. Adjournment-** Motion was made by Alderman Leonard, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Benson, Vote Passed 5-0

