

# BOARD OF ALDERMEN MINUTES

FEBRUARY 20, 2025, 5:30PM

TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 321 CAUSEWAY DRIVE, WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm by Mayor Mills. After the Pledge of Allegiance, the invocation was provided by Tony Wilson. The following were present:

## Board of Aldermen

F. Darryl Mills, Mayor  
Hank Miller, Mayor Pro-tem  
Jeff DeGroote, Alderman  
Ken Dull, Alderman (via Zoom)  
Vivian (Zeke) Partin, Alderman

## Staff

Haynes Brigman, Town Manager  
Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk  
Jerry Mannen, Acting Town Attorney  
Bill Fay, Director of Public Works  
Matt Holland, Acting Fire Chief  
Brian Murray, Finance Director  
Jason Bishop, Acting Chief of Police  
Katie Ryan, Recreation Programs Supervisor  
Tony Wilson, Director of Parks & Planning

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sue Bulluck, representing the Chamber of Commerce, 1) expressed appreciation to the Board for allowing a representative of the Chamber to serve on the Bridge Replacement Committee; 2) stated that the Chamber would be requesting the Board of Aldermen to adopt a resolution requesting that NCDOT delay the Military Cutoff/Eastwood Road overpass project until the completion of the replacement of the Wrightsville Beach Bridge projects; and 3) noted that the Chamber's request for funding from the TDA was being amended to include the replacement of the Chamber's HVAC unit.

Upon motion by Miller, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Board consented to the remote participation in the meeting by Dull.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Prior to consideration of the Consent Agenda, Partin expressed appreciation to staff for filling in during the recent vacancy in the Town Hall front office as a result of an employee's medical leave and Miller stated that he had received two calls from members of the ABC Board complimenting Police Sergeant Gaither regarding his work in enforcing ABC laws. Miller expressed appreciation to the Chamber for taking the initiative to upgrade the HVAC system using TDA funding. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Consent Agenda. It consisted of the following: 1) approval of the open session minutes of the 01-07-25 special called meeting and the open and closed session minutes of the 01-09-25 regular meeting; 2) acknowledgement of previously-approved special events for March; 3) acknowledgment of departmental quarterly reports for the months of October, November and December 2024; 4) approval of support to request TDA funds be used for the Chamber of Commerce Visitors' Center; 5) approval of a letter of support for the creation of a permanent, long-term and sustainable abandoned and derelict vessel program in North Carolina, as proposed by the North Carolina Coastal Federation, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, and North Carolina Division of Coastal Management; 6) adoption of Budget Ordinance (2025) 646-B funding the purchase of an Idemia fingerprint machine for the Police Department; 7) adoption of Resolution (2025) 2350 supporting the update of the 2016 Beach and Inlet Management Plan (BIMP); 8) adoption of Budget Ordinance (2025) 649-B funding expenses related to new Communications Manager position; 9) set a public

hearing for the March 13, 2025 Board of Aldermen meeting on a Special Use Permit request from Wrightsville United Methodist Church to allow for the addition of a columbarium and memorial garden.

**CONSIDER ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION (2025) 2348 EXEMPTING THE TOWN FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF NCGS 143-64.31 (MINI-BROOKS ACT) FOR ENGINEERING AND CONSULTATIVE SERVICES RELATED TO THE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT FOR ON-CALL ENGINEERING AND CONSULTATIVE SERVICES WITH TRANSYSTEMS; AND ADOPTION OF BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 647-B FUNDING THE CONTRACT**

Brigman reported that the actions were related to the Town's desire to contract with Transystems in order to allow for Chad Kimes, former Division Engineer with NCDOT, to help guide the Town and Bridge Replacement Committee through the bridge replacement projects. Upon motion by Mills, seconded by DeGroot and carried unanimously, the Board approved the three requests.

**CONSIDER ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION (2025) 2349 AND BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 645-B ACCEPTING GRANT FUNDING AND TRANSFER FOR CFPUA UTILITY CONSOLIDATION**

Murray stated that approval of the items would allow for receipt of State funding that supported the utility consolidation and transfer of those funds to the CFPUA, as provided by the merger agreement. Upon motion by DeGroot, seconded by Miller and carried unanimously, the Board approved both items.

**CONSIDER ADOPTION OF BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 648-B FUNDING PAY RATE INCREASES FOR OCEAN RESCUE LIFEGUARDS**

Brigman explained that request was to consider changes to the overall pay structure for the Ocean Rescue lifeguards and to allow for this pay structure to remain in place for the entire season. Brigman noted that 1) training standards had changed, resulting in additional hours needed for training purposes; and 2) the salaries of competing local governments for lifeguards had increased and the Town needed to upgrade the salary levels in order to allow for successful recruiting and retention. Brigman noted the proposed changes would increase the entry level pay from \$17.80/hr. to \$19.50/hr. along with other changes which would increase the average hourly rate for all positions from \$19.78/hr. to \$21.55/hr. Brigman noted that expenses related to the lifeguards were reimbursed by TDA funding. Upon motion by Miller, seconded by Mills and carried unanimously, the pay rate changes and budget ordinance were approved.

**CONSIDER ADOPTION OF BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 650-B AND AN AWARD OF BID TO TIMELESS CONSTRUCTION FOR THE CAUSEWAY DRIVE SIDEWALK EXTENSION PROJECT**

Wilson stated that at the April 2, 2024 Board of Aldermen meeting the Board approved a proposal from Cape Fear Engineering to design a sidewalk along the southern side of Causeway Drive from Live Oak Drive to Island Drive. Wilson said that the Town had solicited bids to complete the sidewalk project and had received only one bid from Timeless Properties, Inc. in the amount of \$270,956. Additional attempts were made with other contractors soliciting bids for this project, but none were received. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by Miller and by unanimous vote, the Board adopted the budget ordinance and awarded the bid.

**OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS**

- A. Acting Town Attorney Mannen: nothing to report.

- B. Town Clerk Heater:** reminded the Board of an upcoming Budget Workshop scheduled for March 10, 2025 at 9:00am.
- C. Alderman DeGroot:** nothing to report.
- D. Alderman Partin:** reported that she would be attending the March 11 meeting of the New Hanover TDA Board at which the Marketing budget would be considered.
- E. Alderman Dull:** noted that the Town and CFPUA were moving along toward the scheduled merger, to be effective in September.
- F. Mayor Pro Tem Miller:** noted that the Causeway Drive repaving project was scheduled to begin on 2/25 and expressed appreciation to the Police Department for the new speed indicator signs.
- G. Town Manager Brigman:** noted that the Causeway Drive paving contractor would also be repaving Lumina Ave. between Causeway Drive and Salisbury St. and that the parking lot at the tennis courts had been completed.
- H. Mayor Mills:** nothing to report.

Brigman also asked for the Board’s guidance on three matters. The first item was a request to allow dogs on the beach during the peak season. Brigman stated that he would like to form a working group of staff and stakeholders to discuss the issue and return to the Board with recommendations for changes to the Town’s ordinances, if any. Dull stated that he would like to see the recommendations be presented to the Planning Board prior to being submitted to the Board of Aldermen. It was the consensus of the Board for Brigman to proceed as recommended.

The second item was a request to support the expansion of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission boat ramp to support transient docking. Brigman recommended that the interested parties engage with the WRC first to determine what the WRC would support before coming back to the Board with a request to support any expansion. It was the consensus of the Board for Brigman to proceed as recommended. Mills noted that he had spoken with Sen. Michael Lee regarding this request and concurred that there needed to be much more details gathered prior to the Board giving this request consideration.

The third item was a request to create a special event permit that would allow alcohol to be served at certain events on Town property. Brigman recommended that staff explore the issue and come back to the Board with options for it to consider which would allow for such use. It was the consensus of the Board for Brigman to go forward as outlined.

**CLOSED SESSION TO CONSIDER THE QUALIFICATIONS, COMPETENCE, PERFORMANCE, CHARACTER, FITNESS, CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT, OR CONDITIONS OF INITIAL EMPLOYMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC OFFICER AS AUTHORIZED BY NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6)**

At 6:25pm Miller made a motion to enter into closed session for the purpose of considering a personnel matter as authorized by NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6). The motion was seconded by Mills and carried unanimously.

Upon motion by Miller, seconded by Partin and carried unanimously, the Board returned to open session at 6:44pm, with no action being taken as a result of the closed session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk