

BOARD OF ALDERMEN MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18, 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 Doug Lain, Pastor, Wrightsville United Methodist Church. The following were present:

Board of Aldermen

F. Darryl Mills, Mayor
Hank Miller, Mayor Pro-Tem
Jeff DeGroot, Alderman
Ken Dull, Alderman
Vivian (Zeke) Partin, Alderman

Staff

Haynes Brigman, Town Manager
Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk
Grady Richardson, Town Attorney
Brian Nague, Police Lieutenant
Jason Bishop, Police Chief
Robert Pugh, Fire Captain
Tosha Campbell, HR Officer
Brian Murray, Finance Director
Bailey Hartsell, Communications Manager
Bill Fay, Public Works Director
Katie Carus-Childers, Parks & Rec. Director
Tony Wilson, Director of Planning

Alderman Partin was not present for the beginning of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Prior to consideration of the Consent Agenda, the Board removed Item e, Budget Ordinance (2025) 677-B, from the Consent Agenda.

Upon motion by Miller, seconded by DeGroot and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Consent Agenda. It consisted of 1) approval of the open and closed session minutes of the 10-16-25 Board of Aldermen Meeting; 2) approval of recurring special events; 3) acknowledgement of previously approved special events for December; 4) approval of Budget Ordinance (2025) 676-B funding the increased costs of the Medicare plan for certain retirees; 5) approval of an updated Substance Abuse Policy; 6) approval of requests for new Special Event permits; 7) acknowledgement of departmental quarterly reports for the months of July, August and September, 2025; 8) adoption of Ordinance (2025) 1869 amending the Town Code and changes to the Bylaws of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to reflect the separation of the Parks & Recreation Department from the Planning and Inspections Department.

Alderman Partin arrived at this point of the meeting (5:34pm).

PRESENTATIONS

Consider a presentation of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Greer Templer, Senior Transportation Planner, WMPO, presented the “Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050” Transportation Plan. Topics covered included 1) an overview of the Wilmington Area Urban Transportation Planning Organization (WMPO); 2) WMPO responsibilities; 3) a description of the Plan, which identifies transportation needs and a blueprint for meeting them over the next 25

years; 4) a review of the planning process, which included public outreach, vision statement development, goals development, 5) modal project scoring and policy development; 6) regional priority projects; 7) financial forecasting; 8) alternative financing; 9) plan outcomes; and 10) a review of Wrightsville Beach priority projects.

Consider a presentation on adjustments to the Town's Pay and Classification Plan as a result of a market-based internal survey and consider approval of Budget Ordinance (2025) 679-B enacting the recommendations

Brigman stated that during the budget process, the Board agreed that staff would conduct a compensation analysis to determine where the Town's pay ranges fell within the market for similar positions to enhance the Town's ability to recruit and retain quality employees. Brigman recognized Human Resources Officer Tosha Campbell for her work in collecting and analyzing data to provide for the recommendations before the Board. Brigman stated that competition for the Town's employees primarily consisted of surrounding jurisdictions such as Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Leland, Pender County, Burgaw and New Hanover County. These market peers were used to compare jobs and pay for those jobs. Brigman noted that the recommendations were limited by budget considerations, not only currently, but forecast into the future.

Brigman listed 4 recommendations: 1) make salary adjustments for current employees; 2) job classification adjustments; 3) minimum and maximum salaries for each pay range; and 4) change in Police Department adjustments for non-ranked employees. Brigman stated that he was asking the Board to only address the salary component at this meeting through adoption of the budget ordinance, noting that adjustments to classifications and pay ranges would be presented at a future meeting. Brigman stated that total annual costs for the adjustments was \$240,000. However, because the salary adjustments would be effective in December, the total budget amendment for FY25-26 was \$138,452. The average increase across all employees was 4%, which ranged from 0% to 22% based on individual circumstances. Of the 68 full-time employees, 48 would receive some type of increase. Employees not receiving an increase had recently benefited from promotional or hiring practices. Brigman noted that the recommendations included a change in how the Police Department provided salary adjustments which had historically resulted in compression issues whereby supervisors were in some cases making the same or less than those they supervised. Future Police Department increases would be limited to rank changes only. Currently the Department grants both a probationary and promotional increases for entry level police officers who go from Police Officer I to Police Officer II to Master Police Officer. The proposal eliminates these increases and instead increases the hiring pay rate for new officers. Brigman stated this change was supported by the Police Chief.

DeGroot expressed support for the changes, noting that the Board had been attempting to increase compensation over the last 3 years to improve competitiveness and that this was the final action to achieve that goal. All other Board members supported and reiterated these comments. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by Mills and carried unanimously, the Board adopted Budget Ordinance (2025) 679-B funding the recommendations.

PUBLIC HEARING – *None.*

CONSIDER ACTIONS RELATED TO THE RENOVATION OF LEE'S NATURE PARK BY THE RILO FOUNDATION

Carus-Childers noted that the Board had considered a presentation during the August meeting from Brian Estes, representing the RILO Foundation, outlining a plan to renovate Lee's Nature Park in memory of his late son, Riley. At that time, it was understood that the Board would be asked to consider a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Lee Family, RILO Foundation and the Town which would outline the agreement under which the renovation would occur. Carus-Childers also noted that the Board was being asked to approve a Resolution which would support

the redevelopment and to approve an application to rename Lee’s Nature Park to Lee’s Nature Park by the RILO Foundation. Upon motion by Miller, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Board 1) authorized the execution of the MOU; 2) approved the application to rename Town assets; and 3) adopted Resolution (2025) 2361.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN INTERN FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Hartsell asked the Board to consider approval of an unpaid, temporary, part time Communications Intern from UNCW for the period January – May 2026. Hartsell noted that the Intern would work 15-20 hours per week during that time. Upon motion by Dull, seconded by Miller and carried unanimously, the Intern position was approved.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT

Carus-Childers stated that the Board had approved a special event permit application for the Carolina Pro Am Standup Paddleboard Surf Contest for November 7-9, however, due to scheduling issues, the organizers had asked that it be rescheduled to April 24-26, 2026. Carus-Childers noted that the application had been reviewed by staff and by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee with no objections. Upon motion by DeGroote, seconded by Miller and carried unanimously, the amendment was approved.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 678-B APPROPRIATING \$18,100 TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR A THREE-MONTH PILOT PROGRAM UTILIZING THE SOUNDVUE NOISE CAMERA SYSTEM

Brigman stated that in response to citizen complaints regarding loud noises from vehicles, the Town was proposing to implement a pilot program utilizing the SoundVue Noise Camera System to capture license plate information from vehicles which emanate noise above a certain decibel level. Brigman stated that no other jurisdictions in the State were currently utilizing such a system. Brigman stated that the pilot program would be tested for a few months, with no enforcement being done during the pilot program. Brigman stated that a police officer would review the information captured by the system, with a civil citation being issued once the program was implemented. Chief Bishop responded to numerous questions from the Board regarding specifics of system operation. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Budget Ordinance was adopted.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET ORDINANCE (2025) 677-B CLOSING FUNDS 45, 49 AND 58 AND AMENDING THE RESPECTIVE FUND ACCOUNTS

Murray explained that the Budget Ordinance closed three project funds where all associated projects have been completed, and no further expenditures are anticipated. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Budget Ordinance was adopted.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION (2025) 1862 OPPOSING THE FUQUAY-VARINA INTERBASIN TRANSFER AND REQUESTING ADDITIONAL COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARING

Brigman stated that the Town of Fuquay-Varina was requesting that DEQ grant them the ability to pull 6.17 million gallons of water out of the Cape Fear River Basin and discharge that water into the Neuse River Basin. CFPUA has asked all of its member jurisdictions to approve a resolution opposing the request and asking for additional public comment and public hearing. Brigman stated that such a transfer would reduce the water capacity for every downstream user. Upon motion by Miller, seconded by DeGroote and carried unanimously, the Resolution was adopted.

OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS

- A. Alderman DeGroot:** commented 1) regarding the recent municipal election, characterized much of what went on as “ugly” in that there were negative comments regarding the current Board and staff; 2) the current Board had been moving in a positive direction and had for some time; 3) no drastic changes needed to be made as a result of the election; 4) there was a divide created by the election and that the Board would look to unify; 5) the election pitted neighbor against neighbor and stated that this was not “who we are” as a municipality; 6) he believed that the Town had a “healthy” Board that had accomplished much despite many challenges, such as Covid, approval of using sand from Masonboro Inlet for beach nourishment, transition of staff including new Fire and Police Chiefs and Town Manager, stating that he was proud to have been part of the Board during this period.
- B. Mayor Pro Tem Miller:** expressed appreciation to DeGroot for his comments and stated that he had appreciated serving with the members of the current Board and staff.
- C. Alderman Partin:** 1) expressed appreciation to Carus-Childers and Town staff for their efforts regarding the Veterans Day Ceremony; and 2) she had attended the NC Movers Assoc. annual convention to provide a welcome on behalf of the Town.
- D. Alderman Dull:** expressed appreciation for DeGroot’s comments and asked that the new Board unite and provide an example for the citizens.
- E. Town Manager Brigman:** nothing to report.
- F. Town Attorney Richardson:** nothing to report.
- G. Town Clerk Heater:** nothing to report.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk