

BOARD OF ALDERMEN MINUTES

MAY 9, 2024, 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 Caroline Jenkins, Pastor, Little Chapel on the Boardwalk Presbyterian Church. The following were present:

Board of Aldermen

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

Staff

Tony Wilson, Acting Town Manager
Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Upon motion by Miller, seconded by Partin and carried unanimously, the Board amended the agenda to include consideration of a short-term lease agreement between the Town and Camp Chris Stone for the Bordeaux Cottage.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – *None.*

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Partin, seconded by Miller and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Consent Agenda. It consisted of: 1) the minutes of the open and closed sessions of 4-11-24, the 4-15-24 budget workshop and the 4-19-24 special called meeting; 2) approval of special events as recommended by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee; 3) acknowledgment of departmental quarterly reports for the months of January, February and March, 2024; and 4) adoption of Resolution (2024) 2331 declaring parking meter heads surplus and authorizing the sale on GovDeals.

PRESENTATIONS – *None.*

PUBLIC HEARING

Attorneys Matthew Nichols and Madeline Lipe, representing the property owners, asked the Board to continue consideration of a public hearing on a pier and dock exception for property located at 502-504 N. Channel Drive to the June Board of Aldermen meeting. Upon motion by Miller, seconded by Dull and unanimously carried, the Board agreed to continue the public hearing.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH CAMP CHRIS STONE FOR THE BORDEAUX COTTAGE PROPERTY

Wilson asked the Board to approve a 3-month lease agreement for the Bordeaux Cottage property (5/15-8/15/24). Wilson outlined the terms of the agreement and asked that the Board authorize the Acting Town Manager to execute it. It was noted that, in addition to the \$100 monthly lease payment, the agreement provided for reimbursement to the Town of insurance and utility expenses associated with the lease. Upon motion by Partin, seconded by DeGroote and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agreement.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION (2024) 2323 ADOPTING THE WB BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Recreation Programs Supervisor Katie Ryan noted that in August 2022, the Town was awarded a grant by NCDOT to develop a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan. The Board appointed the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to serve as the steering committee for the project. Ryan stated that Kimley-Horn was the consultant assigned by NCDOT to develop the plan with NCDOT and Wilmington MPO staff participating in the committee meetings and development process. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee was recommending that the Board adopt the Plan as presented. The Board heard a presentation by Starla Couso, of Kimley-Horn, who: 1) reviewed the planning process; 2) described key elements of the Plan; and 3) provided an overview of the Plan (introduction, existing conditions, public outreach, recommendations and implementation).

The Board expressed appreciation for the presentation and the work of Kimley-Horn. The Mayor noted that the Board was deferring consideration of adoption of the Resolution approving the Plan, stating that it wanted to have time to hear the presentation and give consideration to it, including input from members of the public.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE (2024) 1859 AMENDING THE BEACH AND SHORE ORDINANCE 92.18 (D) TO CHANGE THE TIME OF DAY WHEN BICYCLES ARE PROHIBITED ON THE BEACH STRAND

Wilson presented a revision to the Beach and Shore Ordinance which would allow bicycles to be on the beach before 10:00am and after 5:00pm, a change from the current hours of before 9:00am and after 6:00pm. Wilson stated that this change was in response to a request from a resident. In response to a question from Dull, Police Chief, David Squires, stated that bikes operated by throttle only (no pedal-assist) were prohibited on the beach. Upon motion by Miller, seconded by Dull and carried unanimously, the Ordinance was adopted.

DISCUSSION OF THE FY24/25 BUDGET PROCESS AND CONSIDER SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET FOR JUNE 13, 2024

Wilson noted that the final budget workshop was scheduled for 5/16 at 9:00am and the public hearing was scheduled for the Board's regular meeting on 6/13. By consensus, the Board agreed to set the public hearing as scheduled.

CONSIDER AN UPDATE TO THE COMMEMORATIVE BENCH PROGRAM, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ryan stated that the Town had initiated a Commemorative Bench Program in August 2019 in which 29 benches were built and installed, allowing persons to sponsor a bench for \$600. Ryan reported that many of the benches had been lost or consumed by the dunes and that with beach nourishment complete and sand fencing and sea oat planting projects nearing completion, the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee would like to resume the program and add benches as spots are available with changing beach conditions. The Committee reviewed the program and voted unanimously to recommend the Town resume the Commemorative Bench Program, building benches with treated lumber and installing bronze memorial plaques on the back of the bench. The Committee also recommended increasing the cost of sponsorship to \$1,000 to cover the bench, bronze plaque and staff time. It was noted that persons whose benches had been washed away would be given the first opportunity to sponsor a bench. Upon motion by Dull, seconded by Mills and carried unanimously, the Commemorative Bench Program was approved as proposed.

OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS

- A. **Mayor Mills:** 1) noted that Finance Officer Murray had circulated a proposed policy on donations to outside agencies and asked the Board members to review; 2) noted that former

Mayor Fran Russ had passed away recently at the age of 94 and expressed appreciation for all she had done for the Town.

- B. **Mayor Pro Tem Miller:** noted that the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge had completely reopened on May 8th, ahead of schedule.
- C. **Alderman DeGroote:** commented that the abandoned trawler had still not been removed from Banks Channel; Squires stated that a contractor was scheduled to begin removal work next week.
- D. **Alderman Dull:** reported that progress was being made on the water/sewer merger with the CFPUA and he was hopeful that a deal would be struck.
- E. **Alderman Partin:** stated that the Ad Hoc Committee was close to making a recommendation on a revised lighting ordinance to be presented to the Planning Board.
- F. **Acting Town Manager Wilson:** reminded all present of a blood drive scheduled for 5/31 and a community meeting to be held by the Police Department for the purpose of educating citizens on fraud prevention on 5/28.
- G. **Town Clerk Heater:** stated that it was anticipated the consultant hired for the Town Manager search would have a draft advertisement for the position shortly and that he would circulate it to the Board upon receipt.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance G. Heater, Town Clerk