

# PINE KNOLL SHORES COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS

By Yvette Bannen

## Second BOC Meeting in May

On May 22, the Board of Commissioners met at town hall for the second regular meeting of the month. Four members of the public were in attendance.

Unfinished business pertaining to the 2014-2015 budget was discussed, including what to do about an increased amount of junk/trash being deposited at Lot C adjacent to the Public Safety Building and how to deal with the messy appearance. Commissioner Edwards did a survey and said that most of the junk shows up on Sunday afternoon when second-home owners go back home. Various options were discussed, including closing the lot—but it is a service benefiting all Pine Knoll Shores residents. It was recommended to add a roll-out dumpster for large items and begin three-times-a-week pickup at Lot C during the busy summer months. Regular curbside pickup for refuse, recycling and yard waste will not be changed.

Renovation of the town hall kitchen that is used by volunteers for various meetings was discussed and a plan was outlined, including changing the layout, replacing the appliances and adding a dishwasher, installing plain cabinets, increasing counter space and installing new flooring. The painting, plumbing and electrical work will be done by town staff. The cost is estimated at \$20,000 and some of the funding would come from the USDA designated reserves left over after the loans on the Public Safety Building were refinanced. This was approved 4-1 (Edwards opposed).

Repaving .6 mile on Oakleaf Drive, from Juniper Road to Sycamore Drive (not including the McNeill Bridge segment) would cost \$115,000. It was unanimously approved to use the designated street reserves.

A \$1,000 donation to Allies for Cherry Point was approved 4-1, with the funds coming from contingency.

Compensation for members of the Board of Commissioners was discussed and it was decided to increase the amount by \$100/month, for a total of \$3,600 annually. The vote was 3-2 with Commissioners Edwards and Corsello opposed. One of the commissioners noted that there were "more and more meetings to attend."

Sand fencing on the beach was discussed, with one option being to repair as needed and wait another year before adding more fencing. In addition, "channeling" at the beach accesses and hotels to protect the dunes would be beneficial.

Under new business a resolution was approved unanimously to oppose Section 19 of Senate Bill 786. The legislative proposal would cap the increase in a municipality's property tax revenue at 8% and it would restrict municipal flexibility to respond to fiscal crises and/or dramatic fiscal events.

## Special BOC Meeting

On May 29, there was a Special Board of Commissioners' meeting and there were four members of the public in attendance. Commissioner Edwards was absent.

With the arrival of hurricane season, it was time to award the three emergency contracts. The Phase I contract is for the immediate response after a storm to clear the streets for emergency access, and was awarded to WS Parks Contracting because it is local and has done work for the town in the past.

The Phase II contract was awarded to TAG Grinding Services from Alabama, specializing in disaster relief. TAG has done work for the town in the past. It is responsible for loading, hauling and disposing of vegetative material as well as removing construction and demolition debris.

No bids were received for pumping storm water (Phase III) and will have to be rebid.

Town Manager Kramer gave the budget message for FY 2014-2015 and said that the budget represented three months' work. The proposed budget is available on the town's website (townofpks.com) and hard copies can be reviewed at town hall and the library.

The proposed budget recommends the same tax rate of 15.6¢ per \$100 of assessed property value. An increase in the solid waste fee from \$160 to \$175 annually is recommended to provide quality service for collection of refuse, recycling and yard waste. The oceanfront and non-oceanfront municipal service district tax rates will remain unchanged at 5.2¢ and 1.4¢ per \$100 of assessed property value, respectively. No changes to the rates in the Water Enterprise Fund are recommended.

A public hearing on the budget was scheduled to take place at the next regular BOC meeting on June 12 at 6 p.m.

During the citizen comments at the end of the meeting, a person professed not to realize that the commissioners were paid. Mayor Jones responded that they receive a stipend that has not changed since 2007.

## June BOC Meeting

At this meeting on Thursday, June 12, it was announced that the next regular BOC meeting will be on Wednesday, July 9, at 6 p.m. This was a reminder that the commissioners will be switching the day of the meetings.

There were 15 members of the public in attendance at the meeting. During both of the public comment periods, most of the concerns were regarding the commissioners voting themselves an increase in compensation. Comments were also made about the sign ordinance.

A public hearing was held on the FY 2014-2015 budget but nobody signed up to speak.

Town Manager Kramer gave his monthly report on various projects ongoing in town. The Pine Knoll Shores Sidewalk Phase II project was rebid because the previous nine bids exceeded the engineer's estimate. A preconstruction conference was scheduled for June 13. The sidewalks will be from Oakleaf Drive to the Hampton Inn driveway as well as a segment from the Public Safety Building to Pine Knoll Boulevard, both on the north side of Highway 58. A draft will be developed for a sidewalk questionnaire to determine interest in future sidewalks in town. (See "New Business" below for further information on the sidewalk project.) Mr. Kramer reported that we are still waiting for pricing information on the smart meters. An engineer has been engaged to help prepare the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan application by its September deadline. Because federal money is involved, it is possible that the town may have to pay for installing the meters rather than using town employees. A phone call was received about the Knollwood lot that is for sale, but no bid has been received as yet. There are some lingering details associated with the East End Stormwater project, so it isn't completely finished.

Unfinished Business: The FY 2014-2015 budget was unanimously approved and it was noted that the tax rate remains unchanged from last year.

There was a long discussion about the new sign ordinance drafted by the Planning Board. There was a call for a public hearing to be held at the regular BOC meeting on Wednesday, July 9.

There was an update on the pay-by-phone paid parking at the two public beach accesses and it was recommended to continue with the current operation that provides the necessary funds to cover the annual leases for lots/accesses. The vote was unanimous. Crime has disappeared at the two paid parking lots because of the presence of town employees. In response to a question about the unattended parking lots, it was reported that there is sporadic crime at those.

New Business: Only one bid was received for the Phase II sidewalk contract for \$136,000 from Jymco Development, Inc. NCDOT is providing \$109,000 in funding and if the Hampton Inn contributes the expected \$15,000, the town will be responsible for \$12,000. The contract was unanimously approved.

Tom Kerwin was unanimously appointed to the Parks and Recreation Committee.