

Board of Commissioners

By Paige Gillespie

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on January 12, and all commissioners were present.

Mayor Brodman made the following announcements:

- February 10-11—Board of Commissioners Annual Offsite Retreat
 - February 24—Beach Commission Orientation for newly elected officials
- Twelve people spoke during the public comment session.

The Consent Agenda, including past meeting minutes, Parks and Recreation Committee (PARC) volunteer appointments, a resolution to accept a new records retention schedule and tax discoveries and releases, was approved

Under Unfinished Business:

- Sidewalks & Pedestrian Master Plan: Brian Kramer, Julie Anderson and Charlie Rocci presented an overview of the sidewalk project and the pedestrian master plan. The results of the sidewalk survey were reviewed. Potential funding options were discussed, and an analysis of the results was discussed. The board voted unanimously to include sidewalk financing in the FY2023 budget discussion. Along with this, they authorized Town Manager Kramer to reach out to Arendell Engineers to get a cost estimate on a sidewalk on the south side of Highway 58.

Under New Business:

- Julie Anderson presented Budget Amendment #5 that includes land survey services for the equipment building (FEMA excess funds project), sidewalk survey printing and mailing services, social media archiving services, unemployment benefits and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) consulting services. The amendment was adopted unanimously.
- Brian Kramer requested authorization to apply for an NC Land and Water Fund (NCLWF, formerly the NC Clean Water Trust Fund) grant to fund Phase III of the stormwater project. The application is due February 1, with the grant being awarded in September. The project must be completed within two years. If he is confident that the town will receive the grant, the design and planning of the project would be done over the summer, with construction to be done next winter. He has spoken to all but one of the affected homeowners, and they are all onboard. The board voted unanimously to authorize Mr. Kramer to proceed with the grant application.
- Review of Town Strategic Plan: Board members have received the updated Strategic Plan. Strategic Planning Committee Chairman John Ferguson was to present a briefing at a special meeting of the Board of Commissioners on January 19.
- Offsite Agenda Topics: Board members suggested possible topics for the agenda for the February offsite meeting.

Town Manager Brian Kramer reported on these items:

- NCDOT drain lines: A former DOT employee believes their argument that they are not responsible for maintaining the line is invalid. Brian told the homeowners to expect DOT to fix the line but not to expect long term maintenance.
- Waste Removal: There were a few glitches with the new trash/recycle company, but the first two weeks went fairly smoothly. Recycling did not go

so well because plastic bags were found to be in recycled materials at many homes. If the recycling is in plastic bags, it is rejected. Town staff is working on educating the public on what can and cannot be recycled.

- Brown Yard Waste Bags: The NC Department of Environmental Quality says that the bags are not inert debris and cannot go in the landfill. The other towns along Bogue Banks are able to use them. Mr. Kramer will meet with the governing commission, possibly in March.
- Town's 50th Anniversary: History Committee and PARC representatives were to meet in January to continue planning for the anniversary.

Finance and Administration: Julie Anderson reported that property taxes are now past due and that interest is now accruing monthly on unpaid taxes. She reminded everyone that the Carteret County reappraisal team is still completing the full list and measure of properties in Pine Knoll Shores. The new appraisals should come out in February 2024. The US Treasury issued the Final Rule for the American Rescue Plan funds. It consisted of 437 pages of changes, clarifications and new limitations. She does not see any impacts for the town.

Police: Chief Ryan Thompson reported that the department received 100% on the Criminal Justice Standards Audit in January. Firearms training, mandated in-service training and background investigation files are inspected every three years. The department is up to code in all areas. He welcomed new full-time Officer Jeffrey "Chase" Kearney. Officer Kearney was previously with the Wayne County Sheriff's office. He noted that 2022 mandated training has already begun and that Sgt. Bishop will attend a two-week general instructor school in February.

Public Services: Director Sonny Cunningham reported that two water leaks were repaired. In addition, he has scheduled the inspection of Well #1 for February and is having the backhoe bucket cylinder replaced.

Fire/EMS: Chief Jason Baker reported that December was a good month and that this has been the slowest winter since Hurricane Florence. Regarding his report of 1,189 training hours for December, Chief Baker clarified that each month's reported training hours are inflated as they collect training hours from their part-timers that they have done with their full-time employment. They will certify their hours so they can remain on our state roster.

Town Planning: Kevin Reed reported that staff issued three Single Family Landscape Plans (SFLPs) for December. There are currently six SFLP applications pending, and the Community Appearance Commission was to conduct four visits for SFLPs in mid-January. The town's consultant for the UDO was to conduct the initial meeting with the Planning Board at its January 25 meeting. He discussed shellfish leases and the Shellfish Enterprise Area (SEA) Program in Pine Knoll Shores.

The building inspector's report noted that 15 building permits were issued at a value of \$2,396,350. Additionally, there were four mechanical, six electrical and one plumbing permit issued. The total value of all permits issued was \$2,521,180. There were 104 inspections performed and 13 tree removal permits issued.

Town Clerk: Charlie Rocci reported that he received two bids for the Acorn Court stormwater project; however, both bids came in above the \$75K budgeted for the project. On March 19, there will be a tree giveaway to coincide with NC Arbor Day. He will hear back from sponsors in early February. He reported that the selection of the winner of the Ken Jones Public Service Award was difficult due to the excellent choices. Sonny Cunningham was the well-deserving recipient of the award.

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