



Kramer's Korner

By the time you are reading this, hopefully we will be moving into what is usually the warming period in Pine Knoll Shores. January and early February were cold, and I am glad those temperatures are in the rearview mirror.

On February 10-11, the Board of Commissioners held its annual two-day planning meet-

ing. This month's article is my summary of the major topics discussed. No formal decisions were made on anything of significance (that was not the intent of the meeting), but for a snapshot of where the commissioners' focus will be over the next year, the following is presented. Much of this is budget-focused, and the discussions at the planning meeting will almost certainly be merged into the budget planning meetings that start in March.

The past year's accomplishments. Here are a few of the things achieved in the past year:

- The Pine Knoll Shores Strategic Plan was adopted.
- The Phase 2 storm water project was completed.
- The Phase 3 storm water project was planned, and a grant was submitted.
- The 2021 civic event calendar was completed by the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- A solid waste contract was signed with a new contractor.
- The Acorn Court project saw easements and bids completed.
- The town was awarded the Pelican Award by the NC Coastal Federation.
- Successful negotiation of new *Shoreline*/Station Club contract was achieved.
- The Planning Board began work on a Unified Development Ordinance.
- Our sixth HOA Summit was conducted.
- The Veterans Park Living Shoreline was constructed.
- Pedestrian Planning Group IV conducted work for sidewalk planning.
- The town addressed another threat to our sales tax revenue from the mainland towns.
- The 2021 Kayak for the Warriors was a success.
- The town's 50th Anniversary planning began.
- The Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative tree trimming project was completed.
- We installed security cameras and new door locks at town hall and the public safety building.
- We closed out FEMA reimbursements from Hurricane Florence and submitted a proposed list of expenditures using remaining FEMA funds.
- We planned for major town water system upgrades and water main replacements.
- We passed ordinances related to items left on the beach overnight, strengthening the protection of beachfront dunes and vegetation, and made our development ordinances compliant with recently adopted State law.
- We constructed a new sidewalk segment on Pine Knoll Boulevard.
- We reduced the speed limit on Highway 58 to 35 mph and painted center lines on Oakleaf Drive and Mimosa Boulevard.
- We completed major audio-visual equipment upgrades in the town hall boardroom.

- We completed the post-Florence beach nourishment/dune planting and made a decision to stay with the Bogue Banks Master Beach Plan rather than join a US Army Corps of Engineers project.
- We issued over 20 single-family permits for new construction in town.
- We applied for and won acceptance to the NC Resilient Coastal Community Program.
- We had an inspection by the state and improved our fire readiness rating.
- We were again selected for NC's "Watch for Me" program for pedestrian safety.
- We formed a committee of volunteers to help get the Bogue Banks Public Library Branch opened full time.

Assignment of commissioner responsibilities. In addition to attending monthly board meetings, each commissioner has responsibilities to attend meetings of other town boards and committees, as well as the responsibility to represent the town in activities outside our borders. See the Town Crier pages in this issue for those assignments.

Review of the town's financial policy. In 2011 we established a financial policy for the town. This policy set goals for our reserves, set limits for debt levels, and addressed other details related to our financial position. The commissioners discussed having the Finance Committee get together this year to review this policy.

Update to ordinance regarding outdoor fire pits. The board discussed updating the ordinance to allow individuals a use fire pits (the type you purchase commercially). As presently written, our code requires a permit from the fire chief to use these, and we want to get away from that.

Electronic speeding signs. In the upcoming budget discussion, the board will consider purchasing electronic signs that display speeds along with a message. This would be to address speeding within the neighborhoods of Pine Knoll Shores, not on Highway 58.

Employee wages. Another issue the board will face in the upcoming budget planning sessions is wages for our employees. The current inflation rate is an issue that is familiar to all of us. Additionally, we want to remain competitive with our surrounding communities to keep the great employees we have now. Other local agencies, particularly in public safety, have made adjustments over the past three months, and we do not want to lose employees to them.

Sound-side kayak access. This discussion centered on a topic which has come up in the past. That is, if a homeowner is not a member of Beacon's Reach, McGinnis Point, Pine Knoll Association, or PIKSCO, they have no access to Bogue Sound to launch a kayak. I anticipate that during the budget discussion we will consider applying for a grant to construct some type of kayak launching structure at the end of Veterans Park behind town hall.

Budget planning for the next fiscal year. The board approved a timeline for working our way through the budget planning process. Please see the Town Crier pages in this issue for those dates and times. You can see when all of the meetings are to be held as well as state-mandated deadlines.

Briefing from our citizen boards and committees. The directors of the groups of great volunteers who offer their time to work on the Planning Board, Community Appearance Commission, Parks & Recreation Committee, History Committee and Strategic Planning Committee all updated the commissioners on work in the last year and their plans for 2022.

Implementing actions from the recently adopted Strategic Plan. At its two-day planning session, the board took a look at the Strategic Plan and selected the

(Continued on page 28)