

**Town of Swansboro
Board of Commissioners
September 13, 2021 Regular Meeting**

In attendance: Mayor John Davis, Mayor Pro Tem Frank Tursi, Commissioner Pat Turner, Commissioner Harry PJ Pugliese, Commissioner Larry Philpott, and Commissioner Laurent Meilleur. It was noted that the Board had returned to remote meetings through the ZOOM platform as allowed by NCGS 166A-19 due to increased COVID19 cases county-wide. Governor Cooper had declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020 and it remained in effect.

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Mayor Davis gave the invocation.

Public Comment

Citizens were offered an opportunity to address the Board regarding items listed on the agenda. No comments were given.

Adoption of Agenda

On a motion by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Philpott, the Agenda and Consent Item below were unanimously approved through roll call.

Meeting Minutes – August 23, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Business Non-Consent

Budget Ordinance Amendment #2022-2 - On July 20, 2021, the Town received notification that the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources awarded \$9,000 through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to Certified Local Governments (CLGs) for the Swansboro Architectural Survey Update. The total project cost was \$15,000 and as a condition of the grant, the Town was required to contribute \$6,000.

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Tursi, seconded by Commissioner Philpott Budget Ordinance Amendment #2022-2, accepting \$9000 in grant funds, and appropriating \$6,000 from fund balance was unanimously approved.

Christmas Decorations Discussion - The Town had received \$6,943.78 in donations specific to the improvement of the Town's Christmas Lights that were annually installed, mostly along NC24. The proposed plan of action was:

The proposed plan/recommendations were as follows:

1. Replace the current, inefficient decorations (incandescent bulbs) with a new, more efficient decoration with LED bulbs. These replacements should reduce the monthly

amount for operations paid to the utility company. The estimated cost per decoration was \$1,000 (including freight).

2. Set-up an annual rotation for a total of three years (this one counting as year #1), budget approximately \$7,000, and have up-to-date Christmas lighting.

3. If there was a desire to add to the inventory, that could be done also. Please note that there were added expenses to pay for the additional outlet for the pole for the new addition along with the increase in month operating expenses. Manager Seaberg did not recommend pursuing that until the existing inventory was upgraded.

Mayor Davis inquired if the Board would consider adding to the donations to improve the inventory quicker. He also asked how quickly the lights could be purchased/received. Manager Seaberg shared that Mosco Designs was the vendor. Although he was unsure how long it might take to receive additional lights, it was noted that specialized decorations would take longer – such as the swan pole silhouettes. Public Works would install Christmas decorations the week prior to Swansboro by Candlelight – the second weekend of November.

Board members supported the matching funds but noted that replacing bulbs should be an annual maintenance item. There was support to match up to \$12,000 if additional donations were received. A budget amendment would be prepared for \$7000 to match the \$6943.78 already received. Mayor Davis indicated that he would be happy to put out fillers for additional donations.

Future Agenda Items – Future agenda items for the coming month were shared for visibility and comment. In addition, an opportunity was provided for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas.

It was noted that there were no items scheduled for the October 11, 2021 regular meeting. Unless something came up that could not be pushed to the October 25th regular meeting, the Board agreed to cancel the meeting since staff would be preparing for Mullet Festival the week prior when agenda packets had to go out.

Public Comments

Citizens were offered an opportunity to address the Board regarding items not listed on the agenda. No comments were offered.

Manager Comments

Manager Seaberg announced he was resigning effective October 7, 2021 to pursue another career opportunity. The Town had great staff and he appreciated his tenure with the Town. Mayor Pro Tem Tursi believed the citizens of Swansboro deserved an exit statement from the Manager. Manager Seaberg shared he was looking for a career change, had accepted a position with Cherry Point, adding he felt burnt out with 20 years of public service; his heart was no longer in it, and he believed Swansboro deserved more than he was providing.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – Russell Pearlman of the Wooten Company would provide a final assessment for the EOC on September 27th. Manager Seaberg offered his opinion that new construction was better than a band aid for the current site. The current agreement with Swansboro United Methodist Church would only serve to house the staff during an event stronger than a Category 1. Communications had not been successful from the site to date. The Town had a standing agreement with Caterpillar for a trailerable generator when needed. He was also working to secure mobile hotspots to improve cell phone communications if needed.

Board Comments

Board members thanked Manager Seaberg for his tenure with the Town but understood his decision for a career change.

Board members also shared concern with the TV coverage on what was portrayed as a town officials hurricane preparedness meeting – headed by Mayor Davis last week. Most board members had not been invited, nor had the Police Chief, who served as the Town Emergency Operations Coordinator. Mayor Davis explained that the meeting was that of the volunteer humanitarian group formed after Hurricane Florence. He indicated that the TV coverage mis-announced that the meeting was town officials. For those interested, he would make sure they were invited to the next meeting.

Regarding the search for the next Manager, Assistant Manager/Town Clerk Paula Webb would serve as Interim Manager. Board members all agreed that the search would be delayed until after the election in November.

Closed Session

On a motion by Commissioner Philpott, seconded by Commissioner Turner, the Board entered closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5) to instruct the public body's staff concerning the position to be taken on a proposal contract for the acquisition of real property. The vote was unanimous.

Pursuant to a motion made in closed session, the Board re-entered open session at 6:45 pm. No action was taken in closed session.

Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Philpott, seconded by Commissioner Turner, the meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Regular Meeting Sept 13, 2021



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1. Please turn cell phones to “off” or “vibrate”.

2. The Board offers the public three opportunities to speak during the meeting:

A comment period is offered at the beginning and end of the meeting. Please note that a separate opportunity is provided for those items requiring a public hearing.

Public Hearing(s) – There are no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

3. Under the ZOOM Meeting Platform, individuals wishing to make comments should “raise their hand” 🖐️ from their computer. At the appropriate time, Major Davis will acknowledge those with comments.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizen opportunity to address the Board for items listed on the agenda.

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AGENDA AND CONSENT ITEMS

Action Needed: *Motion to Adopt the Agenda as prepared (or amended) and approval of the Consent Items*

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NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

Budget Ordinance Amendment #2022-2

On July 20, 2021, the Town received notification that the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources awarded \$9,000 through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to Certified Local Governments (CLGs) for the Swansboro Architectural Survey Update. The total project cost is \$15,000 and as a condition of the grant, the Town is required to contribute \$6,000.

Action Needed: Motion to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment #2022-2, accepting \$9000 in grant funds and appropriating \$6,000 from fund balance.

Presenter: Sonia Johnson – Finance Director

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NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

Christmas Decorations Discussion

The Town received \$6,943.78 in donations specific to the improvement of the Town's Christmas Lights that we annually install mostly along W. Corbett Ave. A proposed plan of action is provided for discussion and guidance.

Action Needed: Discuss and provide guidance beyond recommended plan of action.

Presenter: Chris Seaberg – Town Manager

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NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

Future Agenda Items

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board with matters that staff anticipates/proposes for upcoming meetings. It should be noted that these items are tentatively scheduled for the specified monthly agenda but are subject to change due to preparation of materials, public notice requirements, etc. In providing this memo each month, we hope it will also provide opportunity for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas, which will allow staff the opportunity to plan accordingly.

Action Needed: Discussion and guidance to staff on future agenda items.

Presenter: Paula Webb – Assistant Manager/Clerk

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizen opportunity to address the Board.

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MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Chris Seaberg, Town Manager

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BOARD COMMENTS

Mayor John Davis
Mayor Pro Tem Frank Tursi
Commissioner Pat Turner
Commissioner Harry "PJ" Pugliese
Commissioner Larry Philpott
Commissioner Laurent Meilleur

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CLOSED SESSION

Motion to enter break out room for Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5) to instruct the public body's staff concerning the position to be taken on a proposal contract for the acquisition of real property.

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ADJOURN

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