

Southern Shores Town Council  
Public Safety Committee Meeting  
10:00 AM Monday August 31, 2015  
Town Hall Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

Attending:

Committee Members: Mayor Bennett, Councilman Sanders

Staff: Police Chief David Kole, Fire Chief Ed Limbacher, Surf Rescue Director Mirek Dabrowski, Public Works Director Rachel Patrick, Town Manager Peter Rascoe

Public: Albert Ewerling, 187 S. Dogwood Trail, Southern Shores

Meeting Agenda:

1. End-of-Summer Briefing on Beach Operations - Mirek Dabrowski, Surf Rescue
2. Review of Summer Traffic Data Collection Procedures – Chief Kole
3. Update on Consideration of Traffic Signage (Town-wide) Needs– Chief Kole/Rachel Patrick
4. Other Matters Timely and Important

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bennett, who announced the agenda order would be shifted to allow the Surf Rescue Director time to attend.

Chief David Kole reported on his Department's summer traffic data collection procedures. He reported some technical problems with the collection devices. NCDOT has experienced the same problems with its devices as well. He will have data in report format soon. Chief Kole did report the number of vehicles on side streets had been significant this year. He surmised this was due to more detailed and usable digital smart phone and pad apps being utilized by drivers.

Chief Kole also reported on his Department's ongoing evaluation of traffic signage needs at all locations in Town. To make traffic violation determination easier for his officers, Chief Kole has requested the Public Works Director to install street-level stop bars at the South Dogwood and North Dogwood Trails' stops at the Dogwood Trails intersection. The Public Works Director acknowledged that her Department will be doing that. Staff members and Committee members also talked about the ongoing evaluation of the necessity of other existing stop signs, including stop signs on S. Dogwood Trail at Mallard Cove Loop, stop signs on East Dogwood Trail at Hickory Trail, and stop signs on S. Dogwood Trail at Yaupon Trail.

Surf Rescue Director Mirek Dabrowski reported that summer rescue activity had been mild this season due to press reports on southeastern U.S. shark activity - which seemed to keep swimmers in shallow water. Recent rescues are attributable to changing ocean conditions. He also reported that the dynamics of the changing beach widths had made it difficult for emergency vehicles to transit this year.

Councilman Sanders reported his observations of the beach's condition between house #180 and #192 Ocean Boulevard. He observed the shoreline having receded in that particular area, making the distance between the existing dune and the surf narrow. Town staff will keep monitoring beach conditions. It was

noted by the Town Manager that the Kitty Hawk beach nourishment project will provide 1,000 ft. of sand for an end-taper of that project on the southern end of the Town's public beach.

Mayor Bennett asked Town staff about the history of speed limits on Ocean Boulevard and Duck Road (NC Highway 12). Chief Kole and the Town Manager both reported that the matter had been settled by NCDOT three years ago when the Town Council requested a year-round reduction of the speed limit from 45 to 35. NCDOT had replied then it would not lower the speed limit year-round from 45 to 35 on NC 12, but could only lower it during summer months. There being no need to lower the speed limit during summer months due to slower traffic volume, the Town Council had decided then to make no further request of NCDOT.

Mayor Bennett also asked Town staff about NCDOT protocol for approving and installing more crosswalks along NC Highway 12. The Town Manager stated that NCDOT's strict policy is to not install a crosswalk unless it is situated between two actual dedicated pedestrian walkways – and not situated between a pedestrian walkway on one side and merely a street opening on the other side.

Chief Ed Limbacher reported that his Department had a busy summer. He also reported that the results of a recent 'Ratings Inspection' would be available in 45-60 days.

The Town Manager reported that the Tall Pine Bridge Replacement Project was now in the bid process. The Public Works Director reported that bridge closure date is now estimated at October 15, 2015.

The Committee made no recommendations to the full Council. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Note: After adjournment, Mayor Bennett invited questions of committee members and staff from the attending public. Albert Ewerling thanked Chief Kole and his Department for their presence at the Dogwood Trails intersection during Saturday traffic, and offered continued use of his driveway by the Department for enforcement. Chief Kole acknowledged Mr. Ewerling's thanks, and stated that the first two traffic citations issued that day were to local drivers.