



Town of Southern Shores
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TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT

February 14-15, 2012

February 14, 2012
9:00 a.m. –Pitts Center

All Council Members present: Mayor Hal Denny, Mayor pro tem Jodi Hess, Council Members George Kowalski, David Sanders and Larry Lawhon. Also present: Town Manager Peter Rascoe and Town Clerk Carrie Gordin.

Mayor Hal Denny called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Town Manager commented on what he hoped to realize from the retreat and also made comments on existing operations. He proceeded to introduce each Department Head presenting a report.

Department Reports

Each department head gave a brief update on their responsibilities and the process in carrying out their daily work schedules. The departments included finance/human resources, fire, police, public works and code enforcement/planning.

The following on-going procedures were discussed:

Process for Capital Improvement Planning (CIP)

The current process for selecting capital improvement projects each year was discussed.

Following discussion on possible alternative processes, no action was taken.

Council Rules of Procedure

Upon review of the Council's current Rules of Procedure, there was consensus among all Council members that several changes should be made. The Town Manager will present a resolution reflecting the changes at the March Council meeting for Council consideration.

Commercial District Issues

The Town Manager suggested certain restrictions in the current zoning ordinance may need to be reviewed in light of the current economy and business inquiries for establishing business in Southern Shores.

Following discussion by Council it was suggested that the matter be discussed at the Joint Meeting with the Planning Board.

Fund Balance

The Town Manager and the Finance officer discussed the Town's current fund balance policy. The Finance officer stated the Town auditor has recommended that Council consider changing the current policy to reflect a more realistic minimum percentage, and even possibly consider establishing a minimum dollar amount instead.

Following discussion by Council, it was the consensus among all Council members that staff presents a draft policy resolution at the Council's March 6 meeting establishing 1.75 million dollars as a minimum unreserved fund balance.

Citizen Communications

The Town Manager stated the Town communicates with the public in various ways with a twice monthly broadcast email (1200 subscribers), Facebook (450 subscribers), Town website (with a new website upcoming that will allow for citizen surveys), bulletin boards (inside and outside), public notices in local newspapers, the use of TV Channel 20, as well as after hour phone service to leave messages to each department.

Several Council Members discussed the possibility of the Town using Twitter and citizen surveys to reach the public. Videotaping the Council meetings as well as upgrading the audio equipment in the Pitts Center was discussed.

The Town Manager will continue to look into all of the discussed items and report back to Council.

Council Member's Comments

Council Member Lawhon asked that consideration be given to reducing the speed limit on NC 12 from 45 mph to 35 mph at least from East Dogwood going south to Hwy.158 traffic light or a seasonal speed limit change for all of NC 12.

Following Council discussion and a consensus among all Council members, staff will bring a request to reduce the speed limit on NC12 for Council consideration at the March Council meeting.

Council Member Sanders stated he is concerned about dogs running-at-large. He suggested that all dog related calls to Dare Central also be forwarded to the Police Department. Police Chief Kole said he would look into this.

He also asked that consideration be given to amend the current ordinance banning dogs on the beach from May-September by allowing dogs (leashed) on the beach from 6:00 p.m. to the following day's 9:00 a.m. during that season. He would like to hear responses from the public on this issue. It was consensus among all Council members that there was no objection to staff conducting a non-binding and informal electronic survey on this issue and report results at the April Council meeting.

Vision Statement

Mayor pro tem Hess provided a draft vision statement for review by Council. The Town Manager reviewed the Joint Planning Board/Council agenda for the next day's meeting.

Council Member Kowalski suggested having an instructor from the School of Government come to give a workshop for the Planning Board/Board of Adjustment members and the public on land planning issues and procedures. The Town Manager will look into this.

Mayor Denny recessed the meeting at 4:10 p.m. and moved to reconvene at 1:00 p.m. on February 15 at which time a joint meeting with the Planning Board and Council will be held. Mayor pro tem Hess seconded. The motion passed with Mayor Denny and Council Members Hess, Kowalski, Sanders and Lawhon voting aye.

Wednesday, February 15, 2012
Joint Town Council/Planning Board Meeting
1:00 p.m. –Pitts Center

Mayor Denny reconvened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. with all of the Council Members present as well as the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Town Planner. Also Planning Board members present: Sam Williams, Chairman, Jay Russell, Bob Palombo, Bill Gleason, Elizabeth Morey and Gray Berryman. Mike Florez and Ed Overton were absent.

Sam Williams, Planning Board Chairman, thanked Wes Haskett, Town Planner, for all of his help and he stated having a planner has been very beneficial. He stated the last joint meeting was held in September of 2010 and from that meeting two items 1) height calculation zoning text amendment and 2) minor subdivision zoning text amendment were still on the Planning Board's work list as directed by Council.

He presented a flow chart showing the latest planning process proposed between the Planning Board, the Planner and other staff, and Council and stated that unless there were any objections, the chart will become part of the Planning Board's Rules of Procedure. He also reviewed several projects the Planning Board has been involved in such as: the wind generation facilities ordinance, the stormwater management ordinance, the transportation plan, updating of the Town's Land Use Plan, height calculations, and minor subdivision ordinance.

Following discussion with Council, it was the consensus of all Members that the Planning Board does not need to continue addressing height calculations. Council did direct that an ordinance amendment for minor subdivisions be pursued.

Discussion was held regarding the Commercial Zoning District and what could be done to attract new business. The Planner will review the existing code and submit to Planning Board his recommendations for their review.

Discussion was held regarding the planning process on the Planner/Planning Board reports presented at Council meetings. Following discussion it was decided the Planner will give his staff report and the Planning Board Chairman will present any actual planning board recommendations as needed. During the Planner's report he will request any required public hearing be set on matters for which the Planning Board will be making a recommendation. The Planning Board's recommendation will then be presented at the public hearing.

Council Member Kowalski informed the Planning Board that staff is working on presenting a planning workshop with an instructor from the School of Government for Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment. Other municipalities will be invited to participate.

Mayor Denny thanked the Planning Board for all that they do.

Following up on the Retreat agenda Mayor pro tem Hess presented a revised version of the vision statement for discussion.

Council Member Lawhon suggested each Council Member draft a vision statement in their own words and then review for a final version for publication. Council agreed.

Mayor pro tem Hess stated she learned a lot from the department heads' presentations.

The Town Manager stated the Town is working on a new website with the launch date to be announced in the near future.

Hearing no other business Mayor Denny moved to adjourn at 3:25 p.m. Mayor pro tem Hess seconded. The motion passed with Mayor Denny and Council Members Hess, Kowalski, Sanders and Lawhon voting aye.

ATTEST:

Respectfully submitted:



Mayor Denny





Carrie Gordin, Town Clerk