

Town of Oriental – Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 7, 2009

The Oriental Town Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00 pm at the Oriental Town Hall.

Present were: Mayor Sage and Commissioners Bohmert, Cox, Kellam, and Inger
Planning Board Chairman Miller
Long Range Planning members Venturi, Sage and Roe
Town Manager Cahoon
Chief Casassa
9 members of the public

Mayor Sage opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made a motion to approve the March 3rd closed session minutes. Second by Commissioner Cox. Vote 4-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made a motion to approve the Feb. 26, March 3 (with one correction) and March 23 minutes. Second by Commissioner Kellam. Vote 4-0.

WASTE INDUSTRIES – Norma Yanez, Government Contract Manager at Waste Industries, reviewed a bid proposal with the Board (a copy of the bid is in the minutes book). The Board will take their bid into consideration when working on the budget.

PUBLIC HEARING – BROAD STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT ORDINANCE – Mayor Sage opened the Public Hearing. Planning Board Chairman Miller gave a brief recap of the Overlay District Ordinance. The Gwaltney family, Larry, Suzanne and Steve, all voiced their opposition to the ordinance.

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made the motion to close the Public Hearing. Second by Commissioner Kellam. Vote 4-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Kellam made a motion to approve the proposed Broad Street Overlay District as written. This motion died for lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Cox made a motion to table the Broad Street Overlay District. Second by Commissioner Inger. Vote 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mr. Larry Gwaltney questioned what “tabled” meant. (It’s off the table for consideration.) He also stated that the gateway to Oriental begins at Kershaw Road and that, while there are some pleasing/beautiful properties coming into town, there are also dilapidated houses and he would be willing to assist the town in acquiring them to help make the entrance more pleasing.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - A copy of the report is in the minutes book. Regarding the chain of command, Commissioner Bohmert pointed out that whenever the media requests interviews, the mayor is the town's spokesperson.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT – Mr. Davis was not present. He did submit his comments via email on the newly passed noise ordinance. Mayor Sage pointed out that the first three comments pertained to portions of the ordinance that were already in place and not to the recent changes. He reiterated that the recent changes to the General Ordinance were all legal. There was one clerical error (the word “may” was written instead of “shall”) and it will be corrected. He again requested that the revised noise ordinance be given a chance and to remember that it will be revisited in the fall.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT – A copy of the report in the minutes book. The Board discussed the proposed revision to the GMO's definition of Bed & Breakfast. Mr. Miller explained that they were simply adopting the State's definition of the term. There was concern expressed that at least one of the town's B&B businesses would not meet the terms of the definitions. Mr. Miller pointed out that it would be up to the board whether or not to make the existing business come into compliance and that they could create another definition to better describe the business.

TOURISM BOARD REPORT – A copy of the report is in the minutes book.

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made a motion to reappoint Mr. Rich Wertin to the Tourism Board. Second by Commissioner Inger. Vote 4-0. Mr. Wertin's term will expire in March 2012.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT – Ms. Venturi reported that compiling the data from the questionnaires was taking a little longer than originally predicted. The committee anticipates requesting a special meeting with the Board to review the data once it is ready.

BAY RIVER REPORT – A copy of the report is in the minutes book.

POLICE REPORT – A copy of the report is in the minutes book. Also on the police agenda was a review of the 'Policies for and Jurisdiction of Police Boat' that Chief Casassa put together. Commissioner Inger questioned the damage portion of the policy. She opposes it unless there is a thorough check list that gets reviewed before and after each use of the boat.

Chief Casassa informed the board that Captain Larry Walker has offered two free captain courses for him and Sergeant Careway however, as Commissioner Kellam pointed out, the classes run 8 straight days from 8am-3pm in June and October. While the \$800-value offer is generous, she questions the time required in light of the officers' patrol duties and, she feels the policy needs more review.

Chief Casassa reported that the SPVFD told him they are not interested in using the boat as it is too small for their needs. The First Responders did voice an interest but did not take any action on the matter at their last meeting. The boat is docked, for free, at Grace Evan's docks.

Commissioner Bohmert stated that she still questions about how they acquired a boat and Mayor Sage stated that he hadn't known they were in the market for one. Commissioner Kellam erroneously said that the board had voted to spend \$800 for the boat's repair at the October meeting that she missed. (No such action was taken.) Commissioner Bohmert voiced concerns about having two officers on the boat and no one patrolling the streets. Commissioner Inger said she felt the boat would be a good thing for the town. Answering a questioned posed by Mayor Sage, Chief Casassa said they would not do regular patrols, that the boat would only be used in emergencies. Commissioner Kellam asked that the policy undergo more review and be brought back to the May meeting.

Also discussed was a Cops grant that might allow for rehiring Sergeant Careway or for hiring a third officer. The grant would pay for 3 years salary with an obligation to pay 100% of the forth year.

MOTION: Commissioner Kellam made a motion to pursue the COPS grant in an effort to rehire Sergeant Careway. This grant is due April 14. Second by Commissioner Inger. Vote 4-0.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – A copy of the statements is in the minutes book. Some of the summary reports were missing.

SET DATES FOR BUDGET WORKSHOPS – After discussion, the commissioners agreed to set the initial dates for April 22 and April 30 at 8:00 am.

TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES – It was agreed the Midyette Street has a significant problem with speeders. After a lengthy discussion;

MOTION: Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve purchasing a roll of rumble strip to place on Midyette Street. Second by Commissioner Kellam. Vote 4-0.

In an effort to further address the speeding problem, the Board also requested that the police patrol more often and make more of a presence during the times the speeders are most likely to travel down Midyette St., to add more relevant signage to make people aware to slow down, and to again approach DOT to have the speed limit changed on Broad Street from 45 to 35 mph.

CAMP CREEK DRIVE / STREET NAME CHANGE –

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made a motion to approve the name change from Evergreen to Camp Creek Drive. Second by Commissioner Inger. Vote 4-0.

SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARINGS –

MOTION: Commissioner Bohmert made a motion to schedule public hearings on May 5, 2009 to take comments on an amendment to the roof pitch ordinance; on the addition

to the GMO on Vesting, and on an ordinance that changes several items in the GMO. Second by Commissioner Inger. After further discussion this motion was amended to include; (1) taking out the definition of Bed & Breakfast as well as (2) the references to the Division of Water Quality in the ordinance that changes several items in the GMO, and (3) in the vesting ordinance, insert the words used in 2) (c) under 1) and make it (f). Changes to the motion were seconded by Commissioner Cox. Vote 4-0.

SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD –

1) Mr. Frank Roe voiced his opinion that the town should focus on spending as little as possible and get rid of the boat.

2) Mr. Warren Johnson voiced his concern that the financial statements show a 7½% deficit and that the town should not consider getting a third officer.

3) Mr. Bob Miller also said the town does not need a third officer.

4) Mrs. Dee Sage stated she feels the town does not need a boat.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT PERIOD – Commissioner Cox reported on recent developments within the Down East RPO and the Pamlico County Comprehensive Transportation Planning Steering Group. The steering group met on March 11 to review the comprehensive plan and the additions of a bike path and a pedestrian path. DOT's plans show a pedestrian path from White Farm Road and around Oriental. Commissioner Cox had a bike path added to their plan that will appear in the comprehensive plan as a requirement.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS - Commissioner Kellam reported that she attended the NC Rural Economic Development Center meeting on March 11 (attendance was mandatory in order to benefit from Clean Water Partners Infrastructure Programs). A copy of her report is in the minutes book.

There being no further business;

MOTION: Commissioner Inger made the motion to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Cox. Vote 4-0. Meeting ended at 11:00 pm.

William Sage, Mayor

Randall Cahoon, Town Manager