



**ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD
ANNUAL RETREAT**

Friday, March 1, 2019 at 8:30am
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC
Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating

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7 The Town Board of Oriental Annual Retreat held on Friday, March 1, 2019 was called to order at 8am. Mayor
8 Belangia determined a quorum to be present and opened the meeting and stated we can have a public comment
9 period if anyone would like to speak.

10

11 Present: Mayor Belangia, Mayor Pro Tempore White, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Simmons,
12 Commissioner Price, Commissioner Dammeyer, Town Manager Diane Miller, Deputy Finance Director Tammy
13 Cox, Administrative Assistant Jeannine Russo, Public Works Director/ORC Andrew Cox, Volunteer Board
14 Members and Members of the Public.

15

16 Manager Miller started the meeting stating this is an informal meeting where the Board gathers to discuss budget
17 and other issues. By North Carolina General Statutes the Town is required to have a balanced budget to the Board by
18 June 1 for advertisement, usually approved at the June Board meeting after a Public Hearing, put in place ready to
19 open on July 1. Manager Miller spoke about the difficulties with our software transition and how financials were
20 affected causing us to work conservatively. Statute requires us to stay at 8% reserve. Catastrophic events cost money
21 and take a greater percentage of our operating budget to recover. 2015-16 Audit was accepted by the LGC this week.
22 2016-17 should go quickly. Priority for several years has been rebuilding fund balance. Drainage has been a big
23 issue. Buildings are being raised one at a time. GMO revisions and Flood Prevention Ordinance have helped. Will
24 discuss priorities, recovery, capital projects, generator, police, water, Public Works and hear from advisory boards.

25

26 Dr. Bob Biller, Tree Board Chair: Dr. Bob Miller, Tree Board: Dr. Miller spoke about Hurricane Florence and its
27 effects on the Town trees. Ken King has left the tree board and was recognized for his years of work. He introduced
28 Patricia Deitrich, the newest member. Most of the damaged trees were not town trees. After Florence, they removed
29 small trees; town and contractors removed larger ones. Surveyed and pruned trees in need. Toni Leavitt and Missy
30 Tenhet surveyed entire town, reported trees in need. A lot of damage caused by tree topping – should not be done.
31 Showed photos of trees repaired from storm damage. Pump station was damaged on Neuse Drive; some of the plants
32 may survive, some may not. Tree Board is waiting for Bay River to fix lift station. Tree management/pruning cycle
33 program was discussed where Town is separated into three sections, work one section per year. Six new trees were
34 requested by residents, thirteen were replacements. Dr. Miller discussed accomplishments, 400 hours volunteer
35 time, or more. Discussed Arbor Day observation and Proclamation. Budget request remains the same, \$4,000, will
36 go down over time. This will be the 25th celebration of Arbor Day on March 23, pruning workshop possible. There
37 is \$2,500 left from last year and are not planning any big expenditures.

38

39 Dr. Stan Aeschleman, Planning Board Chair: There are currently four members: In addition to Dr. Aeschleman -
40 Cecily Lohmar, Dick Flaherty and Martin Barrow. Sandy Winfrey resigned due to work commitments. It has been a
41 busy year with 30 permit requests. There is a request for a change to sign ordinance along with several other changes
42 and will be presented as a package as a Public Hearing is needed. Planning Board cataloged the locations of all street
43 lights in Town to facilitate future discussions with Duke. Discussed enforcement of violations to the GMO –
44 possibly hire a part-time Code Enforcement Officer. The Board is almost finished with the CAMA Land Use Plan
45 update. Budget request for the Land Use Map as this will require outside expertise. No other budget requests. There
46 are no major projects at this time. He did speak to one item with a house being raised, a nonconformity issue, with
47 location of the electric meter. Manager Miller spoke about a home on South Water Street. It was compliant
48 originally. Building code allows the electric meter be no more than 6' in air or build a stepped structure – even
49 though meters are now Smart Meters - as they still need access. GMO allows the Planning Board to grant an
50 exception for encroachment into setback so the home could be raised out of the flood zone. 6' puts her meter still in
51 the flood zone. It would have encroached 3' into the existing setback. With house being raised and the setback being

52 10', the steps will now make it 6' noncompliant. Manager Miller and the Planning Board agree and will allow Mrs.
53 Kennedy to raise her meter out of flood zone and build steps toward the rear of the house. A Planning Board
54 member needs to reside in corporate limits.

55
56 Lisa Thompson, Harbor Waterfronts Advisory Committee: Back to full membership. Members are Dan Allen, Don
57 McGuire, Jim Blackerby and Pat Stockwell. Ms. Thompson spoke about their budget – comes from half of
58 Occupancy Tax collected from tourist tax dollars. HWAC oversees Oriental's five waterfront areas. She discussed
59 projects and priorities. Whittaker Pointe project: Grants received – 1.68 million dollars to rebuild. Pump out has
60 been rebuilt. Watercraft racks were built at the Wildlife Ramp. They are working with Duke Law students about
61 enforcement. Dredging project has about \$84,000 of \$109,000 match. DEQ will extend the grant another year.
62 These are two separate projects. They have spoken to attorneys, approved money from HWAC budget to have a
63 surveyor certify jurisdictional limits on the water. Unfunded repairs – fishing pier, floating dock for boat races
64 (want). Dinghy dock needs new decking on land. Small boat dock - gangway to be ordered. Dinghy dock extension
65 for day trippers. Manager Miller stated for the floating dock project, we would need access by water. Key West sign
66 was discussed. Net House project will not happen this year – volunteer job. Boating Infrastructure Grant – mooring
67 fields. Commissioner Overcash asked if we can use spoilage from dredging to shore up Whittaker Pointe? We are
68 still trying to make that happen. There is a possibility of filling geotextile tubes with the dredged spoils. Need
69 information from the engineering firm, scientific info/evidence that it will work. Mayor Pro Tempore White: After
70 jurisdiction, what is our authority? Duke Environmental Law Center attorneys assisting with this now have an office
71 in Beaufort, on board with us at no expense to the town. Manager Miller stated there is a Mini Brooks request to
72 approve the survey from the water side and then apply to the General Assembly for a local bill. We will then need an
73 Ordinance – rules. We cannot pass things we cannot enforce. Commissioners Simmons and Overcash spoke to folks
74 in Beaufort about their Ordinances; Brunswick County is the model – we will follow what has been done
75 successfully.

76
77 Marsha Paplham, Tourism Board: Ms. Paplham stated their budget will remain the same. She thanked Public Works
78 Director Andrew Cox for his research on the Christmas decorations that will fit where they will not be hit by trucks,
79 got a special deal on them saving money as well. They will be picked up to save shipping costs. Tourism continues
80 to work with Allison Berry at Our State Magazine, reaching more people all over the state. Quarterly business and
81 nonprofit meetings – brings them together. Tourism is putting together a volunteer list to give to new residents who
82 would like to volunteer their time. Marsha stressed the importance of contributions to the Whittaker Creek Project.
83 Committee currently has three members – can member be from out of the village? Manager Miller will research this.
84 Manager Miller addressed a question from the Quarterly Business Meeting regarding money spent relative to tax
85 base. Tourism immediately impacts the businesses and taxes to the residents. She stressed the impact Whittaker
86 Creek has on the Town, not just the residents on the creek. Members must be, it was determined, currently a
87 resident or business owner in town limits. Ms. Paplham asked if this can be changed. Manager Miller stated it can be
88 without a Public Hearing. Tourism is hoping to have five or six members.

89
90 Water Advisory, no representatives from this Board – down to one member, Mike Steere, who is currently out of
91 town. The work load has been reduced but still value their input where it regards budget and schooling. Looking for
92 someone in the chemical industry or water industry, helps with budget, sounding board for ORC Andrew Cox.
93 Manager Miller requested anyone with expertise in civil engineering or the chemical industry would be helpful.
94 They meet four times a year and twice before budget.

95 Parks and Recreation is also down to one member, Chair Jim Edwards. Manager Miller spoke, Mr. Edwards is the
96 operator of Bow to Stern Sailing so not always available. Recreation is considered a want and not a need, especially
97 in light of events like Hurricane Florence. There have been additions to the playground and is used daily. Some
98 equipment will be replaced due to falling branches from the hurricane. Marsha Paplham asked if Tourism and Parks
99 and Rec might become one committee. Tree Board member Missy Tenhet stated she would be interested in helping

100 Parks and Rec as a Tree Board representative. Tree Board is always out around town, they can do things such as
101 inspecting equipment, fences, etc. Manager Miller feels we need some new volunteers to donate small amounts of
102 time to help with these things.

103 Priorities/Recent History: Two and a half months into the fiscal year, we had Florence and have been doing nothing
104 but Florence since.

105 161 registered boats stayed overnight, probably over 200 as not everyone registers. Boats that overstay are generally
106 broken down – but are still spending money in our economy.

107 Ordinance update: Chapter S is our most updated Ordinance. Last year we added a schedule for development as well
108 as hired an engineering firm to try to revise system development fees. Impact fees were suspended due to Carthage
109 litigation and no longer had validation for the costs. We are awaiting these results. Manager Miller feels fee was
110 justifiable and maybe should have been more. Tap fees for new parcels are a contracted service. These have recently
111 increased and we are spending more than we are taking in. Raising the Annexation administrative fee will also be
112 also be considered. The entire fee schedule will be looked at as well.

113 Asset Management: Rolling stock maintenance, Record keeping: preventative maintenance program in place now.
114 High service pump not re-buildable, must be replaced, worked overtime during storm.

115 Evaluation system working very well. Employees know what their goals are and what is expected of them, better
116 performance.

117 Green Waste: Since the storm, being filed to FEMA, all storm debris. We provide cardboard pick up through the
118 County as a service to our businesses.

119 We are due to renegotiate our trash contract this year, may not have in place by July 1. The new contract will be at a
120 higher cost and there is only one contractor in the area.

121 Grants: We have several going on now, may have more opportunities in the near future, unsure if we can take on any
122 more at this time.

123 Hurricane Florence Restoration: South Avenue – showed photos of before and after – new boardwalk and pier will
124 be at grade and ADA accessible. Boardwalk – 238 feet, replaced. Small boat dock, gangway, fished out and
125 measured to be replaced. Town Dock #1, minimal damage. Rotary water fountain in Lou Mac Park – water line also
126 pulled out and will be replaced, possibly with a dog friendly one. The dinghy dock will be repaired. The fishing pier
127 is out to bid, due today. Benches have been ordered that floated away. Discussed projects: Re-ditching at High
128 street, water line out for second bid. Generator has been submitted to insurance and FEMA, which had been in
129 Capital Reserve. PEV at the harbor restroom is not functioning, submitted to FEMA. Road – awaiting engineering
130 and has not been sent to bid, waiting for FEMA. The waterline is \$65-\$70,000. Electrical poles are not working,
131 severed from Duke. Bid for road will be past \$500,000 threshold, requires formal sealed bid. Mayor Pro Tempore
132 White: Liability during Croakerfest - rebar, snakes, etc. Can it be moved possibly to the waterfront? Mayor
133 Belangia: It has been going on for 40 years, our economy needs it. Any safety precautions put in place are at cost to
134 us - Cost vs. Liability. Mayor Pro Tempore White: We need to get together with Cheryl Thompson and do a walk-
135 around. Mayor Pro Tempore White: Talk to the attorney. Marsha Paplham: If we get fencing, are we still liable?
136 Yes. Moving at pace, FEMA program manager has been wonderful. Manager Miller has signed off two FEMA
137 claims and two insurance claims. Should start moving more quickly.

138 Staffing: Today is Samantha McKinney’s last day. She has taken a position in a law firm. We are still down a Public
139 Works position. Manager Miller will be comparing our salaries to others in the league in towns comparable in size.

140 Public Works Director Andrew Cox: 2018-19 things that did not get accomplished. The used oil heater, company
141 was wiped out by storm. Trailer to be reconfigured did not happen. Police vehicle is here, will take a field trip next

142 break. This vehicle is a police vehicle made for police daily work. We may start a reserve for replacement of the
143 charger, on which we had an unexpected \$3,000 expense this year.

144 Accomplishments: We survived! Recreation equipment replaced, meter change-outs behind but ongoing. There is
145 one 2” meter to be possibly replaced. Hazard Mitigation Plan meetings: drainage was funded at about \$14-16,000
146 per year the last three years, more to be done. Materials purchased for some areas were diverted to others damaged
147 after the storm. We are moving forward but still dealing with recovery.

148 Annexation: Next board meeting, 32 acre property out on White Farm.

149 GMO Revisions coming.

150 Done, in progress, or moved out until next year: Purchased vehicle, fixed dump truck, lead abatement on 75,000
151 gallon tank, purchased truck. We have a Capital Reserve for a structural vehicle with an arm that would allow Public
152 Works to cut ditches, large expense. The crosswalk to Town Hall is backed up until resurfacing. Long range plan
153 needs updating, need survey first. There is a possibility of getting a boat so we can enforce and clean up waters’
154 edge. Audits should be caught up this year. A lot of progress has been made in spite of the storm.

155 The company doing the Pamlico Regional Hazard Plan used 2007 rather than 2017 guidance, affected points.
156 Community rating went from 8 to 9. This affects our flood insurance rates. Manager Miller seeking to speak to this
157 company to get us back to an 8 or a 7. Manager Miller asked the Board to number priorities in order of importance
158 and return to her. New contract (20 year contract) will be signed in 2020 for water tank. Every year our tanks are
159 inspected inside and out.

160 Citizen suggestions: We asked the audience for suggestions. Grace Evans suggested Hodges and Broad Streets
161 drainage – supposed to be the state. Manager Miller spoke with them. Regardless of making progress with them, we
162 will go overland instead of burying infrastructure that keeps getting plugged up. Spoke about areas that once had
163 curb and gutter. Manager Miller said almost every piece of property in town is being developed, this adds to the
164 drainage, water coming off of roofs. She encourages homeowners to keep their ditches clear to get drainage to the
165 existing ditch line; unless we have a deeded easement, public works cannot go in there. Grace Evans suggested
166 pervious concrete. Manager Miller stated she suggests this to new residents but it is almost twice the cost and no one
167 has chosen to use this in their construction and we cannot force folks to retrofit their driveways.

168 Andrew Cox – Water Plant and Public Works

169 Water System needs: Purchased 120 new meters. Looking back at the Smart Valve project. This year ammonia,
170 chlorine and salt have had price increases. Dechlor has had a change in strength - must use more before it is pumped
171 into the river. The Second mixer is paid off; other mixer broke in the storm from either power surge or lightning
172 strike. Smart valve should be done this year. Visited three-year look ahead and the smart valve went from \$6,000-
173 \$10,000. This is why we are doing it now. Accomplished this fiscal year: Safety shower has been built inside plant
174 with eye wash, rebuilt the shower outside and repaired damage from the hurricane. Daniel Early has been sent to C-
175 Distribution and C-Well School. Andrew Cox has been to Maintenance Tech Level 3 and received certification.
176 Discussed water plant repairs. Pamlico County interconnected with us for approximately 45 minutes last week due
177 to a pump issue.

178 Public Works: Drainage at the Methodist Church – installed clean out, cleaned lines. Welcome signs at both
179 entrances to town; we lost one in the hurricane but was brought back and will be repaired. Working on South Water
180 drainage project. Replacing play cushion at Lupton Park and trying to finish recovery before grass-cutting season.
181 Bond Beach has been restored back to the right side of the street using residents’ old Christmas trees. Some tools
182 were replaced due to overuse in the storm.

183 Public Works budget is the same as last year. We may keep uniforms for Public Works but move to self-maintained
184 as the cost is approximately \$4,900 per year. We may bump up the drainage line. Andrew Cox has researched

185 pesticides – we have fully funded mosquito abatement. Several residents are beekeepers in town and found one that
186 is bee friendly and near water.

187 Capital Improvement: Anything valued over \$5,000, Commissioners were given a list. Last year, flood insurance
188 nearly doubled. We dropped that coverage and went with the League's insurance with a \$50,000 deductible. Should
189 we reinstitute the previous insurance or stay with the league? Manager Miller wanted to make the Board aware
190 going into the next year and hurricane season. Looking at the potential to buy a boat and get folks certified to be on
191 the water. Potentially start a new reserve for police vehicle. Continuing the reserve in PW for the skid steer to enable
192 us to do the ditches. The fund from the generator may enable us to do one of the other projects sooner. Replacement
193 of softener media, when this does not work as well, we use more salt as well as the price of salt going up.

194 Police: Need to put software in the new vehicle, increase office supplies, new car printers have thermal paper -
195 bigger expense, increase ammo line - last year \$250, overdrawn \$188. There are new requirements for training
196 certifications as our officers do other larger task force things as well. New ballistic vests - approximately \$700 per
197 vest. Capital reserve: \$5000 in capital reserve. Charger repair has been overdrawn due to lifter issue. Manager Miller
198 will ask for \$10,000 so car can be purchased in approximately three years. Mayor Pro Tempore White: While we
199 are waiting to get jurisdiction, we can still get the boat, deploy booms, etc. Lisa Thompson is acquiring a boat for the
200 harbor, we can utilize if needed. Commissioner Overcash: liability? She would be operating as our agent so we are
201 covered and an Officer can be on the boat with her. Mayor Pro Tempore White: Camp will be selling boats shortly,
202 will look into this. Attendees went outside to see the new police vehicle. Officer Blayney thanked the board for their
203 help in acquiring this vehicle.

204 2020 Cycle NC: Manager Miller spoke about some of the issues with the 2017 Cycle NC. Trash was an issue, on
205 Town property with alcohol. The new director is attending March 5 BOC Meeting. Commissioners suggested
206 Manager Miller make a list of the grievances from the last event to present to the director.

207 Public Comment

208 Missy Tenhet: Ms. Tenhet feels there have been issues with the Town attorney, feels he should be looked at again
209 and has issue with his handling of the Harbor Master position. Manager Miller responded: She is in favor of putting
210 out more information than legally needed in favor of transparency, feels we receive, for the size of our municipality,
211 a disproportionate amount of his time. Commissioner Dammeyer feels the professionalism of Manager Miller is a
212 large factor in the good working relationship with Mr. Davis.

213 Needs/Wants/Nice to Have – More drainage funding, to be fully staffed, reserve to replace the Dodge Charger for
214 Police, continue reserve for Public Works. Culverts: Two options – one is sending a letter to the owner to clean or
215 replace – requires legal intervention at a cost OR at the Town's expense remove and replace or jet them out for,
216 probably, similar cost.

217 Budget Meetings are scheduled as April 10 at 8am and April 24 at 8am.

218 Commissioner Priorities: White: Pointe, channel, rebuilding town, water jurisdiction and authority, what we need to
219 do in 2020, net house, drainage. Price: Infrastructure, drains, water tower, getting town back to normal. Dammeyer:
220 Echoes Commissioner Price - water jurisdiction survey, completion of work on water plant. Overcash: Roads, net
221 house - like to have, encourage volunteers. Simmons: Waterfront, drainage, roads, net house, waterfront jurisdiction,
222 hurricane recovery. Mayor Belangia: Waterfront (South Avenue).

223 Mayor Pro Tempore White spoke about a possible Ordinance change that would allow us to be able to move a boat
224 that has overstayed at TD1 or TD2.

225 **Commissioner Dammeyer** made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Seconded by **Commissioner Simmons**. Motion passed 5-
226 0. Meeting adjourned at 1:52pm.

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Sally Belangia, Mayor

_____ Diane H. Miller, Town Manager/Clerk

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237 Approved _____, 2019 _____