

Town of Oriental  
Town Board Meeting  
October 7, 2014

The Town of Oriental Board of Commissioners held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at 7:00 PM. Mayor Sage determined a quorum to be present and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Sage, Commissioners Overcash, White, Venturi, Summers, Winfrey, Town Manager Miller, Chief Moore, Deputy Town Clerk Beyer and public

The Agenda and Consent Agenda were presented for Board approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Venturi made a Motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Commissioner Overcash seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner White made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda with 3 sets of meeting Minutes and 2 sets of Closed Session Minutes. Commissioner Winfrey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The Mayor then opened the floor to Public Comment, beginning with Ms. Lauren Tuttle, Eastern Carolina Council. She presented a map and a brochure outlining her work on stormwater mapping. She is requesting the Board's approval of the Brochure. A copy of the brochure is referenced hereto and incorporated herein these Minutes. The finished brochure will be available for dissemination in December, 2014.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Venturi made a Motion to approve the stormwater brochure from ECC. Commissioner Overcash seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Grace Evans stated that there were two spills in Whittaker Creek, and the public was not notified. Town Manager Miller stated that there was a published notice in the newspaper; however, the notice was not posted within the time specified according to statute. Ms. Miller spoke with Bay River's representatives, who assured her that any future spills would be noticed appropriately. Ms. Evans also asked about the Bay River Board meeting minutes not being provided for inclusion in the Agenda packet. This matter will be looked into by the Town Manager.

There being no further public comment, Mayor Sage closed the floor.

There will be two public hearings scheduled for Tuesday, November 4, 2014. Both items concern changes to the GMO. The first change is to Article II, Administrative Mechanisms, Section 31 entitled Appointment and Terms of Board of Adjustment, and Section 34 entitled, Board of Adjustment Officers. It was discussed that due to November 4 being Election Day, the regular Town Board meeting will convene at 7:00 PM, however, the Public Hearing will begin at 8:00 PM. This time adjustment will give citizens a chance to visit the polls and attend the Public Hearing.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Venturi made a Motion to schedule a Public Hearing concerning amending the GMO, Article II, Sections 31 and 34 for Tuesday, November, 4, 2014 at 8:00 PM. Commissioner White seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The second GMO Amendment concerns RV Parks in the Town, and will add to Article VI, Development Standards for Specific Uses, Section 89, Recreational Vehicle Parks.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Venturi made a Motion to schedule a Public Hearing concerning amending the GMO, Article VI, Section 89 for Tuesday, November 4, 2014 at 8:00 PM. Commissioner Overcash seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The next agenda item concerned selection of a candidate for the Planning Board's empty seat. The two candidates on the ballot were Mr. Richard Flaherty and Mr. Richard Preble. After the Commissioners voted, Mr. Richard Flaherty received the most votes. Mr. Flaherty will be sworn in at the next Planning Board meeting.

An amendment was presented to the General Ordinance, Chapter K, Water Service. This amendment changed the wording concerning the date late fees were assessed during the billing cycle. There is also a change being made to the Change of Occupancy portion of the Ordinance, wherein 3 or more days notice will be provided when changing the service address or closing account.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Overcash made a Motion to approve the amendment to General Ordinance, Chapter K as presented. Commissioner Summers seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The next General Ordinance amendment presented was to be made to Chapter S, Town Rates and Fees. The police will provide fingerprinting for a \$5 fee.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Summers made a Motion to approve the amendment to General Ordinance Chapter S. Commissioner Overcash seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

A Water Fund Budget Amendment was presented for Board approval. In this amendment, line item 58600, Water Tank Maintenance would be decreased by \$17,000 and line item 56300 would be increased by \$3,500, and line item 56000 would be increased by \$13,500. Since no tank maintenance would be necessary for this fiscal year, the money budgeted for this maintenance can be used for items necessary for repairs and maintenance to the plant, and to replace the brass fittings in inventory that are now considered obsolete.

**MOTION:** Commissioner White made a Motion to approve the Budget Amendment as presented. Commissioner Summers seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The next item for discussion concerned a roll off dumpster at the Water Plant for citizen yard debris. The cost to the Town for a 30 yard container would be a \$30 delivery charge, a monthly rental fee of \$75 and a \$175 pickup for each pickup when dumpster is full.

The tipping fee is .80/ton. There would also be assistance for residents unable to haul the yard waste to the Plant for disposal. No commercial yard debris would be permitted, and the size and diameter of branches allowed. Signage will be posted near the dumpster. It was also discussed having a burn ban in place during the availability of this dumpster. Commissioner White advised making this a pilot project for the short term, and re-evaluate thereafter.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Venturi made a Motion to approve a pilot project for a roll off dumpster to be placed at the Water Plant for yard debris. Commissioner Winfrey seconded. Discussion followed. With no objection from the Board, the Motion was amended by Commissioner Summers to add: Burning of yard debris is prohibited during the time this program is in effect. Motion passed 5-0.

The next item presented on the Agenda discussed changing water rates by discontinuing winter rates.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Overcash made a Motion to eliminate the winter rates from the water rate table. Commissioner White seconded. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Summers not in favor of changing rates outside of the budget process, and has not heard any complaints from staff concerning manually adjusting the rates.

Town Manager Miller stated that each season, the staff must go in and manually adjust the water accounts individually. She also stated that the staff is shopping for a new software program for water billing. The current software being used is unwieldy and there have been several errors and system fails that are the fault of the software provider.

Commissioner Venturi feels that if rates are adjusted outside of the budget process it might be construed as a 'stealth' method of water billing. She suggested averaging between the 2 seasonal rates and come up with one flat rate.

Commissioner Venturi proposed changing to winter rates on January 1, 2015, to allow time to study this change more thoroughly.

Mayor Sage suggested changing to winter rates and leaving the rates there.

Commissioner Summers asked for an amendment to the Motion made to say: remain on winter rates and direct the Town Manager to secure a new software billing program. Commissioner Overcash agreed with the amendment as well.

Mayor Sage then reiterated the amended Motion: There will be a change of rates effective January 1, 2015 from the summer rates to the winter rates. That rate would continue to the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2015. The Town Manager will secure a new software package for water billing and have recommendation to the Board for same. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion moved on to the charge offs discussion. Town Manager Miller provided a list of delinquent accounts to the Board. These accounts remain uncollected due to the customers not paying their final bills, and their deposits either were non-existent or not enough to cover the balance due. Town Manager proposed, moving forward, for all new accounts, increasing deposits by \$50 in Town and \$75 out of Town limits. If the customer is disconnected, they will be required to pay the \$25 restoration fee, plus an additional \$25 towards the \$50 deposit. She also recommended the deposits for businesses and large commercial entities, especially restaurants, be higher. Bay River will not allow the Town to charge off their outstanding portion of the delinquent accounts. Town Manager Miller provided this as information only, and will provide further information at a future meeting.

Town Manager Miller provided her Manager's Report next and introduced Ms. Jordane Tomczak. Jordane will be constructing and installing fishing line receptacles at waterfront locations for her Girl Scout project.

She then provided a drawing of the Water Plant and its drainage issues, illustrating the overflow issues during the softener flushing. The air gap outside of the building is also inadequate, causing difficulty in testing the water and monitoring the back flow and cross connection. The holding tank located outside the plant and buried in the ground, is too small, if it were replaced with a larger capacity tank, it would alleviate some of the drainage issues. There is also a need for a chlorine injection system, an improvement to the system. The effluent valve in Whittaker Creek is installed backwards, and must be repaired for proper discharge. The Budget Amendment presented earlier will cover most of the expenses of these repairs and upgrades. The balance can be drawn from the Depreciation line item.

She reminded all of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day on October 11, 2014 at the Court House in Bayboro.

The Tree Board will be looking at planting additional trees to shade the A/C units outside Town Hall, and adding another island to the parking lot. A handicapped parking area will be provided nearest the Town Hall entrance.

A permit from NCDENR was received and paid for, in the amount of \$810; Public Works employees received their yearly pair of work boots and are also receiving flu shots from the Health Department.

Bay River will be doing some upgrading and rehabbing to their lift stations in Town. The Tree Board has consulted with Bay River to determine trimming of trees near the work sites.

Commissioner Overcash inquired about the mosquito spraying and if it was still going on. Town Manager Miller stated that it has concluded for the season.

Commissioner Summers stated that the South Avenue Litigation is already costing money, and with \$968 being spent this month, and a cumulative total of \$60,411. On November 14, 2014, a calendar request will be filed to hear the Town's request for dismissal.

Town Manager Miller pointed out that we are 25% into our current budget.

Chief Moore presented his police report, stating that the month was relatively quiet, and appreciated the citizens keeping an eye on things and calling when suspicious activities or individuals are seen. Commissioner White stated that there have been several boats that have had items stolen from them.

There were no comments for Committee/Board Reports.

Commissioner Comment: Brave Enough To Wear Pink t shirt fund raiser going on now to benefit Craven, Carteret, Pamlico, Jones and Onslow Counties. Shirts can be purchased at Town Hall for \$20.

Commissioner Summers asked if there was a design layout for the public restrooms and the net house near Town Dock 2. Town Manager Miller has the architectural software program up and running to design the layout. The HWAC has also been in discussions concerning this project.

Commissioner White commented that the Habitat for Humanity house, Oriental's first, is coming along nicely, and the Sylvester family may be in by holiday time.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Overcash made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Winfrey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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Bill Sage, Mayor

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Diane H. Miller, Town Manager