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ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD MONTHLY MEETING
Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 8AM
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC
Mayor Pro Tempore David White officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental Regular monthly meeting was held on Tuesday, September 5, 2023 was called to order
2 at 8:00 AM. Mayor Pro Tempore White determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public.
3 All documents for the meeting were available through the Town's website at www.TownofOriental.com.

4
5 Present: Mayor Pro Tempore White, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Winfrey, Commissioner Roe, and
6 Commissioner Price. Town Manager Diane Miller, Administrative Director Tammy Cox, Officer Wichrowski,
7 Mayor Belangia is absent. Mayor Pro Tempore begins with the Pledge of Allegiance.

8
9 Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Overcash made a MOTION to accept the agenda. Commissioner Roe seconds.
10 Discussion: Commissioner Overcash makes a MOTION to remove Minutes from Consent agenda. 5-0.

11
12 Consent Agenda: Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION to amend the Minutes as follows: Commissioner Roe
13 would like the Minutes to reflect that Mrs. Roe's statement (policies, procedures and precedence) was that the Tree
14 Board should not take action without the consent of the Board. Complaint should have been directed to the
15 Manager. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0.

16
17 Public Comment:

18 8:04 Danny Forman. 105 Gull Circle. Concerned about roads- no tax increase or bond to do that. We have not had
19 paving in 25 years, no planning or savings. Why do we have patching material by the pallet? Engineering estimates
20 on road precedence. Beach sand movement. Net House instead of paving? Why so many vehicles? Why are we
21 maintaining our own vehicles? Why are we picking up limbs? Shrink government.

22
23 Manager asks MPT if he wants her to respond. MPT says yes. Patch comes by pallet- one pallet binder, one patch.
24 Net House paid by Occupancy tax, not town taxes. Beach was being dug out prior to widening, working with NCCF
25 to get a fix. Vehicles are replacement of same vehicles- added one gator- used for mosquito spraying where trucks
26 don't get. Limb pickup was to reduce burning and reduce green waste in ditchwork. At the discretion of the Board.

27 MPT notes we will have a discussion of roads later- finding a date today.
28 From the audience: should wait until new Board takes over.
29 DF: disagrees with engineering numbers. Manager says we paid \$15K for street assessment.

30
31 8:10 AM Gregory Bohmert: Comprehensive Plan comments? We set Public Hearing for November- can comment at
32 November meeting- can also comment at Planning Board Oct 18 on final draft.

33
34 8:12 Eric Kindle as Fire Chief. 1118 Link Lane-discusses BikeMS ride issues. Appreciates participation, however,
35 bicyclists did delay Fire Department response and ambulance response on Saturday of the ride. Letter not voted on
36 by the department- from Asst Chief Wichrowski as the incident commander of the event. Letter had proponents and
37 opponents. More than just delaying a trip, this was an emergency situation. Again an ambulance delayed for an
38 injured firefighter. Communication with the organization produced the desired response.

39
40 Manager notes that a message was sent to riders PRIOR to the incident, reminding them that they are considered
41 legal vehicles and have to obey rules of the road. Also, on the NC STIP, a "modernization" (widening to include
42 shoulders) is on the schedule to happen on the other side of the bridge, but that will not be immediate.

43

44 Julia Tingle Hwy 55. MS Bike ride participant, disappointed that they held up emergency vehicles. Hope that bikers
45 continue to come through.

46
47 Public Hearing: Markup available in our documents. Planning Board meets 10/18 at 3PM and a new draft will be
48 produced for the Nov 14 Public Hearing. Manager encourages everyone to participate in Planning Board to make
49 corrections there. Any public hearing notes that changes can be made at or after the Public Hearing.

50
51 Property Acquisition: Manager notes the map- closed street recently borders the property in question- being
52 donated/quitclaimed from defunct Dolphin Company- noted the safety issues of access to plant, tools, vehicles as
53 WTP is designated critical infrastructure and the intersection of Duke/Tideland. This property gives us access to
54 Hwy 55. To be used for storage/access. Needs to be cleared/fenced. Question from audience about taxes lost. Once
55 Dolphin dissolved, noted as a hole on the GIS map. No loss of taxes to the Town. Asked about taxes to be paid-
56 County contracts that service- there are no taxes due on a "hole" lot. Commissioner Overcash asks if we do not
57 accept, can the other party quitclaim it? Absolutely. MOTION by Commissioner Overcash and second by
58 Commissioner Winfrey to accept the land. Discussion. Commissioner Roe notes we have known about this for a
59 long time, and we have been onboard with the acquisition. WTP needs to be attractive and not an eyesore on Hwy
60 55. Make sure we have a plan (other than gravel access) that we have a plan for the end product. 5-0. MPT asks
61 about opening closed session Minutes. Manager notes that we will put them on November agenda to open and
62 release.

63
64 Budget Amendment: To add both dredging projects to the budget as approved. Not from our funds- all restricted
65 funds (grants), we simply administer. We have received the matching funds from both entities and have deposited.
66 Likely the amount for Whittaker Creek will change- proposing a shift in the channel away from the hard shoal and
67 into the deeper existing path. Also- some destruction happening on the private land that needs to be crossed with
68 pipe. Also, amending GF appropriated to move cash from PW Capital Reserve into GF to spend from last month's
69 permission to purchase replacement vehicle. Not a used vehicle available at the time of purchase- this is a brand
70 new vehicle on the State Contract- 2024- \$37K. Commissioner Roe makes the MOTION to accept the budget
71 amendment. Seconded by Commissioner Overcash. 5-0.

72
73 Damage Assessment of TS Ophelia: Manager notes damage including several trees down, lots of limbs, a few dock
74 boards and railing boards on various docks. Net House fared well, as did Public Restrooms. No indication from
75 State or Fed that recovery money is or will be available. Manager showed several photos. Officer Blayney took
76 home people who drove vehicle into flood waters. PW crew was out cutting trees off road at daylight- insured
77 emergency vehicle access. Midyette St drained very well following drainage work. More surge and less rain than
78 expected. Water Plant fared well. Extra kayak showed up at our kayak ramp if anyone lost one. Power out 7 hours.
79 Whittaker Pointe lost a few boulders of the sill, overall good. HWAC report attached. Hodges St under water again
80 and still- photos have been sent to USDA.

81
82 Fisheries support: Forwarded from Pamlico County a resolution of support for commercial fisheries looking at
83 additional restrictions being imposed. Board's choice if they will also or change and forward. Commissioner Roe
84 believes that all our documents say we will support- we should send a resolution of support to the State.
85 Commissioner Overcash makes a MOTION to send a resolution of support as written by Pamlico. Commissioner
86 Roe seconds. 5-0.

87
88 125th Anniversary celebration funding: Precedent says the Board has funded this celebration in the past- Mayor asks
89 for additional funding. Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION to table the issue until January 2024 meeting.
90 Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0.

91
92 Roads Presentation: Board has talked ad nauseum about how to do it- next budget will determine the plan. Board
93 asked Manager to schedule meeting at Old Theater- it costs \$300. Now asking to schedule HERE a discussion on
94 roads/paving. Doesn't matter what the road looks like, matters what the subroad shape is. Commissioner Overcash

95 explains that this is simply discussion for input on how to move forward. Manager offers to attach the road
96 assessment to the meeting documents following the meeting. MPT encourages residents to reach out to Board about
97 their opinions. We are not alone- lots of other communities dealing with the same. Danny Forman insists we have
98 not done paving for 25 years. MPT says there HAS been planning, COVID money, new houses, cars, etc-
99 tremendous increase in revenue. Manager- we spent \$216K this year in paving, \$99K on South Ave- FEMA funded,
100 \$200K on Maritime Rd from Golden Leaf grant money in past 5 years. Prior to this Manager, were paying ROW
101 maintenance PW salaries from Powell Funds. We have a waiver to save 20 years worth of Powell funds. DF: paid
102 for the first gator from Powell. MPT White asks Mr. Forman to come speak to the Manager directly. MPT White
103 asks to set date. From audience: River Dunes overlaid all roads easily. Manager notes Bayboro did also, but our
104 paver- the only respondent made it clear they would not do that due to the condition of the substrate. It would
105 deteriorate within a few years back to how it was. Question about beach outfall. New reset is wider and all
106 vegetation was removed. PW tells mgmt. that the maintenance is the same, just more visible. Date for Roads
107 discussion: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 6:30PM at Town Hall.

108
109 Sale of the Charger: Resolution to sell by sealed bid according to Statute. You are welcome to reject all bids. KBB
110 says value is \$8K-\$11K- private party. All equipment has been removed, decals will be removed. Console was
111 removed for police wiring- that is the only visible defect. We do not guarantee its mechanical condition. It is to be
112 sold as is, where is with no guarantees or warranties. Manager notes we spent significant funds shortly before it was
113 replaced to make it safe and reliable at the time. Commissioner Roe makes the MOTION that we sell the Charger
114 and approve the resolution for that. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0.

115
116 Library- Sidney Phibbons: update on the trial period of mobile library and building progress. After trial, mobile unit
117 will still come to Oriental, but only to the Piggly Wiggly- 73% of interactions happen there. March-September 323
118 interactions at Piglet, 100 at Town Hall. Commissioner Overcash asks if they will stay a bit longer, since only one?
119 MPT White asks if Billy has given permission- yes. Brief on construction of new library- Bonnie Capps.

120
121 Police Report: Officer Wichrowski gives the report- sign vandalism case settled- petitions filed- they move through
122 the system now- we hope for restitution, community service or both. Purged from juvenile records once adults.
123 Cannot comment on ongoing investigation, can note no public danger.

124
125 Manager's Report: Financials attached. Recommendation on owners who do not agree with drainage plan to clean
126 up and move on. Juvenile petitions- one question was if these are expunged. Manager was assured that they were.
127 October 25 will host County Leadership meeting. Opening spoils site cleanup bids tomorrow- if we receive 3.
128 Manager's 360 degree evaluation for certification will be coming to the Board shortly. You do not have a request
129 from BikeMS now- you will receive this in the Spring/Summer. No need for action today. Did speak with Paul-
130 coordinator of event- again, concern is that they DID send out a reminder to obey the rules PRIOR to the incident.
131 BikeMS did what they could- individual riders did not comply. Asst Chief Wichrowski offered additional
132 explanation for BikeMS letter- need for it to be noted at the time of the incident, for recording purposes. There will
133 be a grant opportunity from BoatUS to remove Abandoned and Derelict Vessels. We don't know how jurisdiction
134 affects this. Water Certificates from Andrew and Daniel- continuing education. Bob Miller becoming part time
135 resident- would like more members to the Tree Board and new Chair. He will make a solicitation for that and we
136 will disseminate. Question from the audience about County Leadership meeting- referred to Tim Buck. MPT White
137 asks about County permission to remove boats- we need to touch base with County. Question from MPT White
138 about resident objecting to work- everybody else drains.

139
140 Question at last meeting about grant filing- Manager goes through one current grant opportunity that looks good on
141 its face- goes through all the steps- what was awarded the previous cycle, priorities- not clearing ditches- creating
142 rain gardens, acquisition of repeatedly flooded properties and NOT allowing to rebuild there (places like Wit's End,
143 the Bean- we don't want that). Qualifications-disadvantaged community- median income thresholds we cannot
144 meet- not disadvantaged- New Bern concentrated project in an area with HUD and generational low income
145 housing. Can only be used in those areas. Utility billing too high- we don't qualify. Cost shares are higher for those
146 who do not have low income, repetitive loss. Our Whittaker Pointe project WOULD qualify for this- but, we've

147 done that. Money has been distributed for water and wastewater facilities that are in flood zones and failing. Also-
148 requires mostly shovel ready- engineering already done. Manager notes the guideline package for priorities (a 623
149 page document). On its face, these sound like great opportunities, but once you dig in, there are so many obstacles,
150 or prerequisites that we do not have Just to clarify what all is required to “apply for a grant”.

151
152 Committee Reports: Tourism did not meet in September. Vicki notes that Parks and Recreation had a cleanup day
153 Sept 26- a lot of things accomplished. Thanks to former Chair and her husband, Bonnie Crosser for big help. Also
154 thanks to Commissioner Overcash for coming out to cut grass.

155
156 Commissioner Comments: Auxiliary Boards- all volunteers- do not publish agendas so that the public knows what’s
157 going on- encourages those Boards to send those to the Manager. BikeMS- no excuse for the behavior- that being
158 said, supports the MS work being done- hopefully a learning experience. Commended Officer Wichrowski for
159 responding to an emergency behind his residence when he could not reach 911 with his phone. Man fell into rocks
160 and was seizing, called Town Hall- Bill and Eric showed up and then EMS- so there is a lot of things that go on that
161 our folks do that we do not know about. They take a lot of flack for all kinds of things, but they are an asset to our
162 community. ANNOUNCES \$5.5M from the State of North Carolina for Water Infrastructure- this is a game
163 changer. Not a grant, a direct allocation. Thanks Senators Sanderson and Hanig and Representative Kidwell, and the
164 local people who introduced him (Jennifer and Dave Wickersham) to those Legislators. Could not have done
165 without information from Tammy and Diane. Commissioner Price notes Senator Sanderson said he can’t do
166 anything without information. Manager Miller and staff gathered information. Commissioner Price carried the
167 information to the Legislators. Purposely did not tell Diane, wanted her to be surprised. Commissioner Price
168 reminds OFFPMF is this weekend, hazmat dropoff also. (Manager goes to get PW Director Cox) MPT White notes
169 Manager eval on November 14. Also- our SUP process is backwards. Wants our attorney to look at our process and
170 make it more like others’. Commissioner Roe agrees. Commissioner Price disagrees. Commissioner Overcash asks
171 if it will mirror the State- it will mirror what MOST do, both are acceptable. Manager notes that Commissioner
172 Price’s objection is rooted in the original construction of the GMNO where it protects your right to do what you
173 want on your property, and leave it to neighbors to prove that is dangerous/disadvantageous to them.

174
175 PW Director arrives. MPT White tells him to pack his bags. (laughter) He is told about \$5.5M for water system-
176 “HOLY COW- thank you very much, I have chills!”

177
178 Manager notes certification for Andrew and Daniel in package- Commissioner Overcash notes that saves us a
179 fortune in contracted licensed operators.

180
181 Next meeting scheduled: Town Board October 24, 6:30PM- Roads workshop.
182 Meeting **ADJOURNED** at AM by MOTION of Commissioner Winfrey, second by Commissioner Overcash. 5-0.

183
184
185 _____
186 David White, Mayor Pro Tempore

185 _____
186 Diane H. Miller, Town
187 Manager/Clerk

188 Approved _____, 2023

189