



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 8AM
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC
Mayor Sally Belangia officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental regular meeting was held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 and was called to order at 8:00
2 AM. Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for
3 the meeting were available through the Town’s website at www.TownofOriental.com.
4
5 Present: Mayor Belangia, Mayor Pro Tempore Price, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Litzenberger,
6 Commissioner Roe, and Commissioner Crosser. Town Manager Diane Miller, Administrative Director Tammy Cox,
7 Public Works Director Cox, Officer Wichrowski, and many members of the Public.
8 Mayor starts with Pledge of Allegiance.
9
10 Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION to approve the agenda. Commissioner Crosser seconds.
11 5-0.
12
13 Public Comment: 8:04 Mayor reads letter sent by Jane David.
14 8:08 AM Greg Bohmert: 311 Midyette St. echo read email, disgusted at Feb meeting. Commissioners are in a
15 position to address issues.
16 8:10AM Roger Huth 3011 Maritime Dr- previous career as financial fraud investigator, series of questions: impetus
17 for Financial Liaison, known risk? Basis of need, work/family balance, perception is damaging, are you considering
18 reduction in force? Commissioner Crosser offers to meet with Mr. Huth. Commissioner Overcash asks that his
19 questions be forwarded to the Board.
20 8:15AM Seafarer Dr. Gail Good: MPT Price was not following current CDC rules- should not have been here-
21 requests vote by nullified, and that Commissioners Crosser Roe and Price resign.
22 8:17AM Butch Rasmussen: 306 Mildred, Asks for Mayor to set the record straight, rumors circulating on social
23 media, Drew should resign if cannot keep up workload, creative editing in Town Dock.
24 8:20AM Terry Halpern: 306 Whittaker Pt Rd: pattern of behavior is undermining management, unclear end goals,
25 undercutting authority, unnecessary Financial Liaison, flier distributed in 22-23.
26 8:24AM Jojo 504 Ragan Rd: please consider making meetings more accessible for those who cannot attend. 32%
27 are under 65, 25.6% employed, regular working hours.
28 8:26AM Jennifer Roe : listened to Feb 6 meeting because could not attend- 2011-2013 we had FL, manager
29 resigned, Manager fired, interim manager- small community, best practices, nobody should call for resignation.
30 8:30AM Angie Propst: thanks to those who organized birthday celebration. From heres, come heres, been heres- all
31 work together. Rallying troops against each other makes it worse.
32 8:34 Richard Lambert: 1112 Neuse Dr has received emails and other support since 2/27 meeting for financial
33 oversight. Concerned that people do not want oversight.
34 8:35AM: Ginger Barnett: Council needs to meet with the people and answer all the questions raised publicly, not
35 one on one.
36 8:37 Eric Kindle: importance of thriving atmosphere- great vibe over the birthday celebration- if this adversity
37 continues, you’ll start losing volunteers- and we all know how much we all depend on volunteers.
38 8:40 Jennifer Pawlikowski: Roger asked great questions- we need those answers to all of us. Please reconsider
39 meeting time- we can’t all be here during workday.
40 8:45 Mayor reads email received at 7:45AM today: Darlene Marquat: Need answers to very simple, straightforward
41 questions.
42
43 Commissioner Litzenberger begins to address the questions, Commissioner Roe states that this needs to happen at
44 Commissioner Comments.

45 Mayor Belangia waves book that has rules and notes she was given this and had read it repeatedly. States that when
46 the people want to speak, they should be able to speak. Commissioner Crosser notes there is a time for
47 Commissioners to speak, according to the agenda.
48

49 Consent Agenda: Several items were approved without discussion on the Consent Agenda by MOTION from
50 Commissioner Roe, seconded by Commissioner Crosser. 5-0.
51

52 ORC Contract: Manager requests authorization to execute the contract with Mr. Jeff Sanders. We currently have two
53 of the four required licenses. Assessment by local gentleman of our wells- may need to be assessed with other parts.
54 Commissioner Roe thanks Commissioner Bohmert and County folks in assisting us. Commissioner Roe makes the
55 MOTION to authorize execution of the contract. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0.
56

57 Manager's Report: Financials attached, including trial balance. Several items came in last minute. Manager's
58 mistake- financials are YTD, not month only.

59 March 29 we will be open- floater holiday, reduced staff.

60 Notice of Violation and Notice of Intent to Assess from DEQ on elevated copper and zinc levels. (EPA changed
61 acceptable levels)- other area systems having same issue. County having same issue.

62 March 15 retreat, documents required by March 8. Explains format.

63 Payroll: system to change- we did the research on other companies- ADP, Paychex. ADP's charges are routinely
64 hidden and grow quickly. No other system has been selected by current users. Additional integration costs would
65 be incurred. Proposed system does everything we get and more. Concern is that we end up with less than what we
66 have. Manager notes that Tammy is leaving after the school year- Manager cannot do her job AND Tammy's- it
67 will take a year to integrate the system. This is the best path. Commissioner Roe asks Commissioner Bohmert and
68 Dan Allen for their issues- Paychex would not answer the questions. On your own conversion. Commissioner Roe
69 makes a MOTION to accept the Payroll module recommended by Edmunds/GovTech and allow the Manager to
70 execute the contract. Commissioner Litzenberger seconds. 5-0.

71 Drainage fund is exhausted. Contracted labor, parts (culverts) and removal of debris is at \$28,000. Dolphin Point
72 issue has a designed fix that can help drain the neighborhood- at least several streets. We will need to increase the
73 drainage contracted funds by \$8,500 to get the Dolphin Point endpoint fixed. Commissioner Roe asks if fund
74 balance can cover this. Absolutely. Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION to help our friends at Dolphin Point with
75 drainage by increasing the allowable funds for contracted drainage. Budget Amendment to follow.

76 Manager's evaluation during retreat.

77 Quarterly mtg scheduled March 28. Topics?

78 New program manager for USDA application. She was our project manager for the Whittaker Point property
79 shoreline rehab.

80 Manager shows photos of accident at Water Plant by salt contractor. Awaiting the bill for adjustment request. (Salt
81 on roof instead of in the tank.)

82 Manager shows Duke Energy implemented rate increase (23%) as of September. Another 5.3% increase scheduled.
83

84 Adoption of Trey Allen's rules: Manager notes we went a long way down the road with City of Denton and Atlantic
85 Beach's one page version- lots of discussion, no adoption (1/22 through 4/23). Commissioner Litzenberger says
86 NCGS says we can adopt our own rules. Hoping to defer any vote until we have further discussion. Commissioner
87 Roe agrees. Commissioner Roe says we can table. Commissioner Overcash notes we can discuss at quarterly or
88 retreat. Commissioner Roe notes we have to do the 160D conversion. Planning Board, ECCOG paid service. We
89 may need to adjust several things- that's the priority- need to put this off. Mayor noted the paperwork passed to her
90 just before the meeting was a hard hit- no heads up it was coming, just showed up five minutes before the meeting.
91 Commissioner Overcash would like for us to continue in past methods.
92

93 Public Hearing: Special Use Permit (SUP) on a request to be part time school at Oriental Baptist- Across from Town
94 Hall): They plan to provide socialization space for otherwise home-schooled students. Manager notes anyone who
95 would like to speak must be sworn in. Parents will accompany, no buses, dropoff, will use their parking lot behind
96 Town Hall. MPT Price (AP) makes a MOTION to open the Public Hearing (PH). Commissioner Overcash seconds.
97 5-0. The Board is welcome to attach conditions to the permit, if granted.
98 Sally Belangia: The Public Hearing is now open. The Town Commissioners shall issue the requested permit
99 SB: I don't believe anyone signed up for this.
100 Commissioner Overcash (CO): We can't really change speed limits or paint anything on Broad St because it is not
101 our road- it is NCDOT road.
102 Manager: NCDOT was petitioned for crosswalk in the past, which they would allow only at the corner. If in front of
103 the Church, the Church would have to give up handicapped parking spaces.
104 From the audience: not sworn in: asks about exception to rules. Manager explains that it is not an exception they are
105 asking for, it is a required Special Use Permit to have a school anywhere, in any zone.
106
107 SB: 1) The permit is not within its jurisdiction (property is within jurisdiction of TOO) The permit IS in our
108 jurisdiction.
109 Does the Public have any comment on jurisdiction of the application?
110 Commissioner questions?
111
112 2) The application is incomplete (the application has been deemed complete by the Land Use Administrator and the
113 Planning Board.)
114 Does the Public have any comment on the completeness of the application?
115 Commissioner questions?
116
117 3) If completed as proposed:
118 a) will not comply with one or more requirements of this chapter (GMO)
119 Does any of the Public have any evidence to offer concerning compliance with the GMO?
120 Commissioner questions?
121 b) will materially endanger public health or safety
122 Does any member of the public have any comment on endangerment of public health and safety?
123 Commissioner questions?
124
125 c) will substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property
126 Does any member of the Public have any evidence to offer that indicates that the project will injure the value of
127 adjoining or abutting property?
128 Commissioner questions?
129
130 d) will not be in harmony with existing uses/development in the area.
131 Does any member of the public have evidence that the project is not in harmony with existing uses in the area?
132
133 e) will not be in conformity of the Land Use Plan or other plan, officially adopted by the Town.
134 Does any member of the public have evidence that the project is not in conformity with existing plans?
135 Commissioner questions?
136
137 Commissioner Roe (FR): I believe Commissioner Overcash and I share concerns about safety of children crossing
138 that road. That's my only concern is that they'll park here and then little kids walking across Highway 55. I don't
139 know what we can do about it, but I have a concern. Any ideas to mitigate that concern and make those kids less apt
140 to somebody hitting them, I'd be..is there anything we can do. I think it's a good idea- the school, but I'm just
141 worried about the children walking.
142 SB: Commissioner Price
143 AP: Aren't the parents with them?
144 DM: yes.
145 SB: Commissioner Crosser? (BC)

146 BC: What they did with the Old Theater- what they did in the olden days when they had at school- person with an
147 orange vest on and a sign that says STOP. That worked very well. So, maybe we just suggest that they have a
148 safety- a crossing guard.
149 DM: You can require, as a condition of granting the permit, that they have one.
150 BC: Because even with the parents and whatnot, I know my..watching my granddaughter go back and forth. It really
151 helped.
152 FR: We can add that?
153 DM: Yes, Sir.
154 FR: Officer Blayney, as a school resource officer, do you have an opinion?
155 Officer Blayney: (NB) Without having NCDOT work something in, but yeah, having their own crossing guard will
156 help- we would have to schedule in- at time of day/ staggered.
157 DM: We cannot commit those resources without 24/7 Police.
158 AP: Makes a MOTION to close the Public Hearing. Commissioner Roe seconds. 5-0.
159
160 Commissioner Overcash proposes we add a condition to the SUP that the school provide a crossing guard at the
161 times the children are going back and forth across Hwy 55 for safety reasons. Commissioner Roe notes they should
162 coordinate times with our Police for their awareness.
163
164 MPT Price makes a MOTION to approve the SUP: reads through 7 conditions as satisfied above. Attaches condition
165 proposed. Commissioner Litzenberger seconds. 5-0.
166
167 Public Hearing #2- Rezoning at 807 Broad St: Restaurant construction ongoing. Documents on screen show
168 movement of the R-3?MU line toward Midyette St, leaving a 15,000 sq ft space in the R-3 zone, increases MU
169 SOME for additional outside service space. Previously owner had asked for entire space to be moved to MU. That
170 allows access from Midyette. Revised line means that there is no access to the MU space through the R-3 space.
171 Planning Board agrees this is a good compromise, that preserves the residential zone. Commissioner Overcash
172 makes a MOTION to open the PH. Commissioner Roe seconds.5-0.
173 Gwendolyn Gibbs here on behalf of Midyette St residents. Concerned with large vehicles coming through. They
174 have cleared the area up against Midyette St. Outdoor venue and the noise associated- know we have a noise
175 Ordinance. Traffic will be an issue- street is already narrow. Against the rezoning.
176 Commissioner Litzenberger asks about access. The post office can use the access- can do that now. Restaurant use
177 is approved by right. Manager notes we cleared the drainage and owner cleared additional mixed vegetation. Post
178 Office can use the access now. No applicant representative. There is no construction past the original line. Moving
179 the line a bit gives them more outside space. Remaining R-3 space is enough for 3 residences, although middle lot
180 has the access easement. The restaurant does not have access to the MU space through the R-3 lots. The owner has
181 fenced outside dining space already. Cannot block the easement. Commissioner Roe asks if we are being asked to
182 vote on this today.
183 Deb Montgomery- live at 809 Midyette St- concerned with traffic and noise. Manager notes restaurant is allowed by
184 right in that zone. Why does the owner need extra space? Pavilion, fence. Commissioner Overcash notes that the
185 total rezone was not likely to pass, the compromise was offered by the owner. Compromise helps the business
186 community. Manager notes if you do not grant rezoning, the restaurant can still happen. Question on distance of
187 space- between old line and new line? Don't have that answer. Rezoning never becomes a precedent for another
188 rezoning- each property request is unique. Commissioner Roe would like to put this off for another month prior to
189 decision. People have legitimate concerns about noise and access.
190 Owner of Southern Ski Lodge asks what intent of the owner is. Extension of patio area- we have not been notified of
191 any use of the grassed area. Drainage is an issue. Encourage growth and value to that area of Town. Take residents
192 AND business interests into account.
193 Howard Cheatham: How does the rezoning affect future sale wrt impervious surface. Could not sell off the lots if
194 cannot make the impervious surface for the existing uses. Manager reiterates that they cannot use that access
195 (Midyette) to the MU use.
196 Commissioner Overcash makes a MOTION to close the PH. Commissioner Roe seconds. 5-0.

197 Commissioner Overcash makes a MOTION to put off the rezoning until April 2, 2024. Commissioner Roe seconds.
198 MPT asks that the owner be notified to appear April 2, 2024. 5-0. Manager notes this does not have to be re-
199 advertised.
200
201 Public Hearing #3- Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Everything directed to be added and changed by TB has been
202 corrected by the PB. Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION that we open the PH. Commissioner Overcash seconds.
203 5-0. Nobody signed up to speak. Mr. Greg Bohmert wishes to speak. Notes he is very pleased with the changes
204 made which make it clear that this is an advisory document. Small picture needs to be ironed out to see the
205 particulars of “what does it mean to encourage business?” Talking about to expanding and allowing access-
206 streaming meetings- something that allows more participation. Allowing people to sign up for notification that this
207 or that Board are meeting to discuss X would be helpful.
208 Jennifer Roe speaks and is pleased with outcome- opinions were considered and taken into the draft.
209 Commissioner Litzenberger makes a MOTION to close the PH. Commissioner Roe seconds. 5-0.
210 Commissioner Roe makes a MOTION to adopt the 2024 Oriental Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Crosser
211 seconds. Discussion: Commissioner Roe notes the huge undertaking- HWAC, Planning Board, Tourism, Tree- all
212 the people who contributed. Specifically noted Allison’s extra work in transcribing and all the changes that were
213 made, as did Julie Rahm, former Planning Chair. 5-0.
214
215 Set Public Hearings: Planning Board forwards to you a request to set PH for: Short Term Rental (STR) Special Use
216 Permit (SUP) for 301 Ragan Rd, rezoning request for 604 Shorey Dr. Note that rezoning requires the TB to not
217 consider the proposed use, but the applicant is required to submit a plan for what they propose to do. Before
218 everybody panics, please read Section 135 of the GMO and the extremely restrictive requirements on constructing
219 one, physical, amenities, limits on stay- also requires a Special Use Permit. Notification will go out once scheduled.
220 Commissioner Overcash makes a MOTION to schedule these PHs on April 2, 2024. Commissioner Roe seconds. 5-
221 0. Bakery PH was removed from earlier draft- Bakery needs LUP, not SUP.
222
223 Commissioner Overcash requests a break. Seconded by Commissioner Roe. 5-0.
224
225 Mayor Belangia brings the meeting back to order. Water Advisory Board (WAB) forwards requests for appointment
226 to the Board- Mr. Richard Guimond, RADM, USN Ret, and Mr. Steven Drew. Commissioner Roe makes the
227 MOTION that the two are appointed to the WAB. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0.
228
229 Board Retreat March 15, 2024. Manager notes retreat March 15- normally see all volunteer Board requests, asks TB
230 for any additional information they might want to see.
231
232 Change of Meeting time. This has been an ongoing debate. You saw this request for reconsideration in December-
233 put off due to practice for the Town’s anniversary play. Town Dock ran a poll (attached) of 8AM, 6PM, or other
234 time. Allison presents results with comments submitted. 141 responses recorded. Overwhelmingly toward moving
235 the meeting time to evenings. Commissioner Roe makes the MOTION to move the meeting time to 6PM.
236 Commissioner Crosser seconds. MPT Price was surprised by comments- Ms. DeWeese provided raw data as to not
237 be accused of hiding information. Open ended portion allowed for suggesting another time. Also spoke out against
238 Town Dock’s reporting. Commissioner Litzenberger reiterates that we would like to keep track of number of
239 attendees moving forward. Commissioner Crosser notes define which meetings- regular, workshop special,
240 emergency. Manager notes you cannot include emergency meetings. All others- except retreat and emergency.
241 Includes budget meetings at night. MPT Price says other meetings. Confirms with Commissioner Roe-motion made
242 is for regularly scheduled monthly meetings at night. 5-0.
243 Commissioner Litzenberger makes a MOTION to move Workshop, Special meetings, and budget meetings to 6PM.
244 Commissioner Overcash seconds. Commissioner Crosser notes participation in budget sessions is smallest

245 attendance. Agrees special meetings should likely be included. Commissioner Litzenberger amends her motion to
246 move the Special and Workshop meetings to 6PM. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 4-1, MPT Price dissenting.
247
248 Police Reports: Officer Blayne notes not a whole lot of activity- starting to work on in-service training
249 requirements. Still doing traffic enforcement. Completed MOU with Havelock PD, where we can request resources-
250 also have one with River Bend and Fayetteville. Sheriff Dept is aware when our Officers are on or not.
251
252 Auxiliary Board reports: HWAC has recommended that the decking be added- allowed by previous motion. Tree
253 Board is set for Arbor Day on April 6.
254
255 Commissioner Comments: Commissioner Litzenberger addresses some inquiries. Auditor does not find fraud-
256 FALSE. Auditor looks at what is given him/her. Also FALSE- they send staff a list and then do a site visit where
257 things are pulled THAT day. With no findings or red flags for fraud, or internal control issues, what is the reason?
258 Oversight and accountability. Noting reasons given for leaving, Andrew Cox spoke to oversight. This is what that
259 resignation will cost: \$91 salaries and benefits- promote two PW staff- one to ORC, one to PW Director \$25K/10
260 months, hire two more PW, raise to \$15/hr or more- \$45K more- \$53K more than retaining Cox. Asks Manager
261 about time spent to FL requests. Is this good stewardship? Residents say this is rumor. Commissioners meet one on
262 one to prevent quorum meeting. This is how rumors begin- phone line changes information. Residents have the
263 ability to request anything, including email. Commissioner Overcash – track working hours, taking kids to school on
264 Town time, pay starts when leave home, Nic driving around instead of conferring with deputies, 8.5 hour days to
265 leave early on Friday, employees making personal purchases and paying town back, reconciliations behind,
266 miscellaneous charges on credits, Diane and Tammy sign each other’s checks, why do all employees have credit
267 cards, track comp time, sick time, etc. Bankcharges from the bank- raised at last meeting- \$500 comes twice a year,
268 interest did not include NCCMT averaged \$1000-\$1300/month. CPA Crosser- tried to have check put into wrong
269 fiscal year, without prior authorization, also tried to get reimbursement.
270
271 Manager responds to NCCMT accounts- higher interest bearing- leaves operating costs to carry emergency
272 accessible funds. Can only move so much so many times. Interest bearing locally changed two years ago- charges
273 up, interest down. Daily deposit to move elsewhere would require us to go there for deposit. In Whittaker
274 Restoration, we drained our account to pay bill prior to reimbursement. Hesitate to move more.
275
276 Commissioner Overcash notes we have not had fraud, we’re set up to prevent, there is no sign of it happening.
277
278 Manager notes she is the Board’s only employee, the rest of staff work for her. If the Board has concerns about the
279 way we operate, please come to her. Police Officer with anyone in the vehicle is insured just like a criminal. Andrew
280 taking his son to school is worth the extra hours in every week that he puts in- those are her decisions. If there is an
281 issue, please come to the Manager. Board sets policy, but we have to work WITH our employees. Manager takes
282 full responsibility for staff actions. Commissioner Crosser addresses reasons posted in Feb 6, 2024 meeting. Reason
283 is we are on the UAL- we ran a deficit on the water plant- additional reporting required on stability of plant. All
284 Board went to training in Wilmington, Reads several quotes from documents from Wilmington training- Board
285 members review reconciliations, rotating of duties, separation of duties, among others. NC Treasurer’s office
286 guidance because of sitting on UAL list. Mr. Huth asks about who else checks. Trying to fill the gap between
287 Treasurer’s office guidance for units on UAL and daily work. Some municipalities use contracted reviews, some
288 use Board members. Past use of Financial Liaison- using expertise of Board members. Won’t debate.
289
290 Jennifer Pawlikowski asks about recommendation of Attorney and NCLM. Commissioner Crosser said the Attorney
291 said it’s not illegal, but staff would not like me looking at their work. Commissioner Crosser notes she is
292 uncomfortable [with debate].

293 Commissioner Roe listed most of the things discussed with Commissioner Overcash, but is not all of the things
294 discussed. Had questions with activities, reports, all kinds of things. Asked CO to talk with others and then get
295 back together, and decide what of this is important or not. Police report is hard to understand. Hoped that we would
296 find out what we need to do- not stir a hornets nest- never heard anybody say anything about firing people.

297
298 We only hire the Manager- she hires and fires the rest. We give her a budget and she has to fill the spots. We do not
299 direct them to do anything. I want to know what we pay people- how many hours do they work? How much time
300 off? Can we be more efficient?

301
302 Goal is to fix roads and drainage. People come to us every day and ask for infrastructure improvements. Look at the
303 budget- how do we fix the roads? This all went sideways because I took concerns to a fellow commissioner- not
304 this- I'm happy to work with anybody and listen to anybody's concerns.

305
306 Commissioner Litzenberger notes that UAL training is put on by NCLM. NCLM also recommended against the
307 position. Personnel issues raised seem to be the catalyst for ORC leaving. Nobody went to Mr. Cox and see what it
308 would take to make him stay. Some of these personnel issues are not attached to finances. What can we do to
309 prevent further resignations? Commissioner Crosser notes financial transparency is her issue. She did not contact
310 him after the article in Town Dock.

311
312 Commissioner Overcash notes evaluation forms for the Manager are in boxes. Those Commissioners here the whole
313 time will be participating. New Commissioners will not be counted. Commissioner Roe notes shifting Manager's
314 eval from annual hire date to FY end. Wants eval again at end of THIS FY. Commissioner Overcash says that's not
315 fair to the Manager- another eval in 3 months. New goals and appraisal cycle at end of FY. Starting this July- next
316 FY end is next eval. Mayor asks if sufficient. Yes.

317
318 MPT Price notes LUP says Positive communication.

319
320 Commissioner Ovecash makes the MOTION to adjourn. Commissioner Roe seconds. 5-0.

321
322 Next meeting scheduled: Town Board March 5, 8AM- Town Regular Meeting

323
324
325 _____
326 Sally Belangia , Mayor

325 _____
326 Diane H. Miller, Town
327 Manager/Clerk

327
328 Approved , 2024

329