

Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
FY06-07 Goal Setting Retreat
Wednesday, March 8, 2006

The Atlantic Beach Town Council held a retreat on Wednesday, March 8, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. at the Trinity Center, Pine Knoll Shores, North Carolina.

Members Present: Mayor Tootsie Vinson; Mayor Pro Tem Doug Creech; Council Members Jim Bailey, Eddie Dawkins and Tom Doe.

Members Absent: Council Seat #5 is vacant.

Others Present: Chuck Cooper, Town Manager; Derek Taylor, Town Attorney; Sabrina Simpson, Town Clerk; Lee Smith, Town Planner; Marc Schulze, Public Works Director; Donna Turner, Inspections Director; Adam Snyder, Fire Chief; Scott Kilpatrick, Police Chief; Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vinson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilman Doe made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Creech, vote was unanimous, 4-0.

RETREAT AGENDA

1. Overview of Retreat Schedule and Objectives-Town Manager

Town Manager, Chuck Cooper welcomed the Council and staff to the retreat. He stated he hoped everyone would be able to gather important information from each other and be able to come up with some short term and long term goals.

2. Department Reports-Town Manger and Department Heads

A) Police Department-Chief Scott Kilpatrick

The Atlantic Beach Police Department is composed of 22 full-time and 12 part-time employees. The department is organized into three sections, patrol, investigations and administration.

Their statistics reflect the benefits of officer training and as a result there has been a decline in the past three years in calls for service and a decrease in major crimes.

There are several projects underway within the department. The statuses of these projects are as follows:

- a. In-car Mobile Data Computers-nine were purchased to equip all the vehicles and the department was still able to stay under budget.
- b. Patrol Boat with Side Scanning Sonar-the patrol boat is still being built.
- c. Tasers-they have become a great tool for the officers and the department has provided mutual aid to Morehead City, Carteret General Hospital, and the County Sheriff Department.
- d. Community Involvement-the department is currently involved in several activities. They include National Night Out, Senior Citizen Are You OK, Community Watch, Bike Rodeo, and Child Safety Seat Inspections.
- e. Grants-in 2005 the department received \$169,800.00 in grant funds from the Department of Homeland Security, \$30,000.00 from the Bullet Proof Vest program and \$1,000.00 from the League Safety Grant totaling over \$200,000.00 in grant revenue.
- f. Sponsorship for Law Enforcement Organizations-they continue to host many N.C. State organizations such as NC Chiefs Association, NC Police Executives Association, NC Crime Prevention Officer's Association, NC Narcotic Officers Association and the NC Criminal Information Exchange Association.

The goals for FY 06-07 are as follows:

- a. To reduce violent and property crimes
- b. Maintain high standard of operation and administration
- c. Continue community policing efforts
- d. Improve service related activities
- e. Seek grant funding
- f. Research programs to enhance inter-operability capabilities statewide
- g. Enhance officer training
- h. Reduce residents' fear of crime and victimization

Their budget goals are to replace patrol vehicles, open a patrol boat lift at Pond Drive, add eleven more tasers and add eight more in-car videos.

The long-term department goals are:

- a. To apply to the National Law Enforcement Accreditation
- b. Department wide firearm rotation (need to replace every ten years)

- c. Implement vehicle rotation schedule
- d. Adequate police facility
- e. GEM cars (total electric)

Councilman Doe asked Chief Kilpatrick for a ledger as it relates to mutual aid given and mutual aid received. Chief Kilpatrick said he would be glad to get that information for the Council.

Councilman Creech commented on the time when the video cameras changed a lady's testimony on bad mouthing the Police Department and she in turn apologized to the department. The video camera kept an officer out of hot water and they do pay off in the long run.

Mayor Vinson asked the Chief if during 911 cases, do the police, fire, and water departments have the capability to communicate with one another. Chief Kilpatrick said yes by radio dispatch and Nextel. There is a statewide push to implement the VIPER system and it is very expensive.

Councilman Bailey suggested the Town buy satellite phones for emergency situations because they are very inexpensive.

B) Fire Department-Chief Adam Snyder

The Atlantic Beach Fire Department is made up of 13 full-time employees and a number of voluntary personnel.

The statistics note that the call volumes have been increasing for a while. The projection is they will continue to increase due to the opening of the new aquarium and the Pepsi Sail America this summer.

The paramedic level care of the EMS function of the Town of Atlantic Beach is self-supporting. They provide mutual aid and also receive mutual aid.

Councilman Bailey stated that there are three county medics provided by the County. He asked if we were benefiting from any of these services.

Councilman Doe said we all know we do not want to lose the level of service provided by our EMS.

Councilman Creech said we have to realize if we use the program provided by the County then we will be controlled by the County. We pay for our paramedics and we control our program but you let the County provide it then the County will start telling us what to do.

Some of the projects the Fire Department has been working on are:

- a. Preparing for the NC insurance rating in two years-the last time the department was rated was in 2001 and they received a rating of 4.
- b. Rewriting the Town's severe weather plan-Chief Snyder is in the middle of rewriting the plan for the Town. It will be complete prior to this year's hurricane season.
- c. Updating departments' pre-fire plans-the department is currently updating their pre-fire plans but they are also overwhelmed with their administrative services.
- d. Grant research and writing-the department has been awarded over \$125,000.00 in grants in the past two years and continues to search for other grant monies. They are currently seeking a grant to replace their 1990 Ford F-700 rescue truck.
- e. Hurricane and severe weather assessment-in the aftermath of Katrina it became obvious that there were areas within the department's emergency services that were lacking if we became vulnerable. Chief Snyder is currently looking at ways to provide training to his staff without cost to the Town.

The goals for FY 06-07 are as follows:

- a. Implement Town's updated severe weather plan
- b. Increase fire prevention through community awareness
- c. Continue to improve Town's fire insurance rating
- d. Continue hosting conferences locally
- e. Fund equipment to be able to perform trench-collapse rescue
- f. Have personnel complete all classes to perform trench-collapse rescue
- g. Find grant monies to replace the 1990 rescue truck
- h. Implement a Deputy Chief's position to do administrative work load

Mayor Vinson asked Chief Snyder if the department had ever had a Deputy Chief. He stated since he had been promoted to chief, it eliminated that position. Chief Snyder stated that the position had to be staffed by a trained firefighter who was certified to do inspections and that the role was not "secretarial" in nature. Councilman Creech stated the Town definitely needed to consider re-implementing that position.

The long-term goals are:

- a. Sizable facility to meet the growth of the Town, department and training needs

- b. Fire apparatus to meet the needs of The Grove and all new residential homes that are growing in height

C) Public Services-Public Works Director Marc Schulze

Currently the department consists of fifteen full-time employees and six inmates. Two employees will be retiring this year.

Current projects within the department include:

- a. Sand fences-permit applied for, project completion date is April 30, 2006.
- b. Dredging-project underway, completion date is expected on April 30, 2006
- c. Perk area improvements/dunes re-shaping-engineering complete, construction completion date April 30, 2006
- d. Causeway Irrigation Project-in progress, expected completion date May 15, 2006
- e. Durham Avenue Handicap Beach Access-demolition complete, expected completion date is May 15, 2006
- f. West End Sidewalk Project-beginning soon, expected completion date is Memorial Day. This took a while due to federal funding. Powell Bill money will be used.
- g. Commerce Way Storm Water Project-in progress, DOT approval received March 6, 2006. Bids will be sent out soon. Powell Bill money will be used.

The goals for FY 06-07 are as follows:

- a. Complete department reorganization
- b. Sidewalks-continuation of sidewalk from Causeway to ABC Store-will have to deal with individual property owners to get mandated six foot sidewalk. Also, in-house sidewalk project along New Bern Avenue
- c. Roadways-pave Barefoot, Cooper Extension, East Asbury, East Ocean and possibly Sound Drive which has not been accepted by the Town yet
- d. Purchase vehicle paint booth-would allow staff to maintain body of vehicles
- e. Acquire emissions scanner-staff currently undergoing training
- f. Water Department - professional engineering analysis to determine growth needs, acquire portable generator for well use, rewire well #4, upgrade fire hydrant (20 are without service valves), start a well maintenance program

Long-term department goals are:

- a. Create and begin fleet replacement program
- b. Continue wastewater treatment exploration
- c. Continue storm water upgrades and planning

Councilman Doe asked Mr. Schulze if the Town decided to take on the responsibility of managing all the treatment plants in Town, how long would it take to train people and get them ready. He told Mr. Schulze he thought it was time for the department to start thinking along those lines.

D) Inspection Department-Inspections Director, Donna Turner

The department consists of two full-time employees, the Inspector and full-time administrative assistant. The Inspections Director is a member in good standing with numerous organizations.

Current activities and projects include:

- a. Promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Atlantic Beach thru permitting and State and Local Code Enforcement.
- b. Total number of inspections for 2004-2005 was 2,586.
- c. Projects include implementing a new permitting software program
- d. Implementing software for Commercial Plans Review

The goals for FY 06-07 are:

- a. Implement electrical and mechanical permits through the use of credit cards
- b. Hire and train an electrical/mechanical inspector
- c. Obtain additional education for all fields of certification in building, plumbing, mechanical, and fire

The long-term department goals consist of:

- a. Inspections office requires more space in order to file the records and plans in an orderly manner
- b. Inspection Director would greatly benefit from a laptop computer based in the vehicle
- c. Hire a mechanical/electrical inspector to help ease workload
- d. Designate an administrative assistant to work full-time in the inspections department only
- e. Add another phone line to help the public reach the office
- f. FEMA program should be transferred to the Planning Director

Mayor Pro Tem Creech stated Ms. Turner needs to have a laptop now. Also, the extra phone line going into the office needs to be taken care of right away.

Town Manager, Chuck Cooper said that he was hearing these requests for the first time just like they were.

Mayor Vinson asked if it would be possible to increase the permit fees in order to increase the revenue for the Inspection Department.

Councilman Doe asked if it may be time to consider putting in our own internet system and not paying the outrageous rates the companies charge.

Derek Taylor, Town Attorney stated that Ms. Turner is personally responsible for the decisions she is making in the field. Any mistakes she makes could jeopardize her license, accreditation and dip into her pocket. The courts now want the towns to be a guarantor of construction that is going on in the towns. Sabrina Simpson, Town Clerk said that the Town's liability insurance does not cover Ms. Turner.

The Town Council retreat adjourned for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 1:00 p.m.

E) Planning Department-Planning Director, Lee Smith

The Planning Department consists of one Planning Director. There is a vacancy for a Zoning Enforcement Officer.

The FY 05-06 current activities and projects include:

- a. Planning and development review services
- b. CAMA Land Use Plan
- c. Beach access programs-one completed project and two on-going projects
- d. Ordinance updates and provisions-three completed projects
- e. Office administration and mapping-on-going

FY 06-07 department goals are as follows:

- a. General departmental improvements-continue to improve customer service, provide training to new Planning Board and Board of Adjustment members, and continuing education as well as general training
- b. Mapping projects-use new mapping software to provide detailed mapping of various items, assist Public Services Department in mapping for water system, assist Fire

Department in mapping of fire hydrant locations, and assist Police Department with improved GIS mapping capabilities

- c. Developmental projects-assist in design of possible storm water management program, assist in providing needs and improvements to town facilities, continue providing improvements to our sidewalk program, develop a mapped paddle trail, street beautification, revise development regulations, and seek grant funding for the complete re-write of new development regulations.

Long-term goals are:

- a. Making improvement with little need of capital expenditures.
- b. Increasing necessary space and equipment to store maps and plans

Councilman Doe asked Mr. Smith if it would be possible to use a company based outside of Town Hall to scan and store a lot of the paperwork and maps that are taking up so much space. Mr. Smith stated they are in the process of getting new software because our existing software is so old and if it crashes we are out of luck.

Mayor Vinson stated she thought that the Town Council Board Room would be a good place to relocate the Inspections/Planning Department. She noted that the building is movable and for the time being the Council could possibly hold their meetings in the Food Lion building once it is purchased. She stated the Town is growing at a rapid rate and we need to accommodate our staff.

Councilman Dawkins was in agreement there are many things the new land could be used for.

Councilman Doe said we have a whole lot on our plate now. We are looking at sewer, dredging, some sort of Town Hall.

Mayor Vinson stated we have got to give the staff room enough to do the jobs we are putting on their plates.

Mayor Pro Tem Creech stated we know everyone needs more space.

Mr. Cooper said we have a lot of the puzzle pieces and now is the time to start putting them together.

Councilman Dawkins asked if there were two issues (besides space) that needed to be addressed for the Planning Board and Board Adjustment retreats what would they be.

Mr. Smith said it would be what is the overall vision the Council would have for the Town of Atlantic Beach. Would it be strictly residential, or an area that has a mixture of commercial activity and residential.

The staff was excused at 1:55 p.m.

3. Town Legal Status/Issues-Town Attorney Derek Taylor

Town Attorney, Derek Taylor stated he was going to go over several issues with the Council on open record. They were as follows:

- a. Litigation-only thing current is A. B. Cooper versus Town of Atlantic Beach. The question being did the Town properly close Central Drive. Attorney Taylor stated he thought this was not a concern for us. Mayor Pro Tem Creech asked if Everett Cameron's name was on the suit. Mr. Taylor said the suit was brought by A.B. Cooper. If anything comes up about the property and it goes to the Board of Adjustment he stated Mr. Everett should not be voting since he made an offer on the property.
- b. Board of Adjustment -there will be copies provided at the next Town Council meeting to approve. The DeMichelle Case will be heard on March 27, 2006. This is a Board of Adjustment factor.
- c. Planning-Attorney Taylor asked the Council to evaluate special use ordinance requirements. There is frustration on the part of the Board of Adjustment. He had been asked to change things. He told them to take their information to the Council and tell them what they wanted changed and let them give consideration to it. Our ordinances are old and may be need to be revised.
- d. Personnel-Attorney Taylor had a new personnel policy handed to him when he took over as Attorney and he has not had time to work on it. Chuck Cooper, Town Manager informed the Council and Attorney Taylor that there is some work being done on that policy right now.
- e. Other-public beach access and storm water and sewer were two topics that tend to come up on e-mail. Attorney Taylor stated he had not received a notice yet to start condemnation proceedings on Henderson Blvd. Town Manager, Chuck Cooper reminded the Council that soon we would be faced with the new CAMA beach access parking requirements and at some point it will hit us and it will not just be related to nourishment, it will relate to other grants. Attorney Taylor advised the Council, during their planning for next year they need to find some way to provide for public beach access. If the CAMA lines change the property will go out of sight. As far as storm water and sewer issues, there will be large scale activities with contracting. On the lines of the Food Lion property, we did receive the approval from the Local Government Commission for the financing. There is now a main contract intact.

Attorney Taylor stated he had been informed there is a maintenance contract now involved and he is being sent the contract. We were scheduled to close on March 15, 2006 and the seller hopes they can make the date. The ATM owners have stated they will leave the building. One thing the Town needs to give to detail is how functioning the sewer system is over there. Mr. Cooper said it is fairly new. Eckerds wants to move but they can not find a reasonably priced place to go.

- f. Time Warner Cable Franchise-Attorney Taylor has suggested some things to Time Warner and should be before the Council by the March 20, 2006 meeting.
- g. Miscellaneous-Attorney Taylor said he is starting to get phone calls from citizens not wanting to communicate with Town Manager. He stated unless it is an attorney inquiring about something he generally will say he has no authority to speak.

4. Town Council/Town Manager Review of Department Reports/Goals

Town Manager, Chuck Cooper asked how the Council would like to use the rest of their time. Maybe it would be simpler to prioritize the items.

- a. Town land-this subject has been discussed in length already today. He asked for the Council to review the proposal from W. K. Dickson. What we have done so far is the survey and an environmental one analysis of the property. This proposal is the recommendation of W.K. Dickson. Councilman Doe asked how you end up with an appraisal until you hire an engineer to come in and access the property. Mr. Cooper said the appraiser is more focused on the land because that is where the real value is. Mr. Cooper would like to see the Council and staff agree upon a comfort level with the company W. K. Dickson so everyone can work together. He recommends this company because they have been picked by previous councils; they have a great reputation and track record. Mr. Cooper was impressed with their ability to talk and understand the dynamics of the government environment. Councilman Bailey said he was impressed with their thought process. Councilman Doe asked what it would cost to get them on retainer. Mr. Cooper stated nothing. They do not want to be on retainer. What would happen is the Council would sign the agreement, and then we would order them to do task order #1. Councilman Doe made a motion to allow Town Manager, Chuck Cooper to execute the contract with W.K. Dickson. Councilman Bailey amended the motion by saying to allow Town Manager, Chuck Cooper to execute task order #1 at \$14,000.00 and \$2,500.00 evaluation fee to total \$16,500.00. Seconded by Councilman Doe, vote was 4-0, unanimous.

(Clerk's Note: Copy of W. K. Dickson contract is submitted and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

- b. Dredging-Councilman Doe said this subject needs a work session to look at short and long term goals.

Councilman Bailey asked Mr. Cooper if he could take the goals from last year and this year and generate a list of priorities for the Council to look at and then the Council could call work session to address each issue.

Councilman Doe stated he would like to call special attention to getting our minutes digitized. It is not something we have to do all at once. We could spread it out 3-5 years. We could have it out sourced. There are companies that do this. He also thought we had agreed to use all our Powell Bill money. Mr. Cooper said we are going to use it between Commerce Way and the sidewalk project.

Mr. Cooper said he would update the strategic project and operations goals as a draft and submit it to Council and ask for input.

Councilman Creech would like for the Council to be able to prioritize issues and when they go into a work session they could focus on one particular item.

Councilman Doe asked Mr. Cooper where we stood with the pay classification study. Mr. Cooper said we should be receiving something back on it in the next week or two.

Councilman Creech stated he agreed with Mayor Vinson about moving the Town Meetings to the Food Lion building and letting the Inspections Department move to the boardroom building. Councilman Doe stated we should put some good solid thinking into our moving process so we would not have to move but once.

Councilman Doe presented a letter from Mickey Stokes pertaining to the property between Oceanana Pier and Triple S.

(Clerk's Note: Letter from Mickey Stokes is submitted and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Creech, seconded by Councilman Doe, moved to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. 4-0 and the retreat adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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Submitted by:

Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

These minutes were approved at the April 17, 2006 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council

Tootsie Vinson, Mayor