

Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Town Council Special Meeting
Tuesday, April 25, 2006

The special meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Tuesday, April 25, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Meeting Room.

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

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Chuck Cooper, Town Manager; Sabrina Simpson, Town Clerk; Scott Kilpatrick, Police Chief; Adam Snyder, Fire Chief; Marc Schulze, Public Works Director; Lee Smith, Town Planner; A.K. Miller, Police Captain; Becky Veazey, President of Management and Personnel Services (MAPS) Group, Inc.; Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Tootsie Vinson called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilman Doe made a motion to amend the agenda to having a closed session held first. He would like to move action item #1 to #2 and #2 to #1. Seconded by Councilman Bailey, vote was unanimous, 5-0.

CLOSED SESSION

Councilman Doe moved that in accordance with the provisions pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3) to consult with Town Attorney to consider and give instructions concerning a judicial action titled Gant vs. Town of Atlantic Beach. Councilman Bailey seconded and approval was unanimous, 5-0. It was 3:12 p.m.

Councilman Doe made a motion to go out of closed session and back into open session. Seconded by Councilwoman Barnes, vote was 5-0, unanimous. It was 3:30 p.m.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Board of Adjustment Discussion-Town Council

Councilman Doe stated he has had more than enough time to conclude that while it was worth investigating he does not believe that it would be in the interest of the Town of Atlantic Beach to dissolve the Board of Adjustment. He encouraged the Council to vote for continuation of the Board of Adjustment as it is now.

Councilman Dawkins said he is in agreement with Councilman Doe. He sees the definite value in keeping the Board of Adjustment the way it is.

Attorney Taylor recommended the Council take action to fill the vacant spots on the Board of Adjustment. Mayor Pro Tem Creech made a motion to move Gary Plough, George Bailey and Markey Burroughs from the alternate positions to regular board members. Councilman Doe seconded, vote was unanimous, 5-0.

Attorney Taylor suggested the Council fill the alternate spots that were just made available by appointing the regular members. Councilman Dawkins nominated Phillip Scott Rice, Michael Warren, and Eugene Walz to alternate positions on the Board of Adjustment. Councilwoman Barnes seconded, vote was 5-0, unanimous. Councilman Dawkins amended his motion to add Robert Manning to the alternate list. It was seconded by Councilman Doe, vote was 5-0, unanimous. This will give the Board of Adjustment a total of five alternates including Joe Loughry.

Councilman Doe asked that the dinner retreat for the Council and Board of Adjustment be re-scheduled. He also recommended the Council sort out who would start new terms and who would finish out the old ones. Attorney Taylor said Councilman Doe brought up a very good point. He suggested another motion be made to do so. Councilwoman Barnes made a motion to replace alphabetically the terms appointed to the regular Board of Adjustment members. George Bailey will replace Ray Barts, Markey Burroughs will replace Ann Batt and Gary Plough will replace Everett Cameron. Seconded by Councilman Doe, vote was 5-0, unanimous.

Councilwoman Barnes made a motion to replace alphabetically the terms appointed to the alternate Board of Adjustment members. Robert Manning will replace George Bailey, Scott Rice will replace Markey Burroughs, Eugene Walz will replace Gary Plough and Michael Warren will move into the open position. Mayor Pro Tem Creech seconded, vote was 5-0, unanimous.

Councilman Dawkins said there are some things that used to be done that he would like to see implemented. When an alternate was called they were asked if they could attend in place of the regular member and they were asked if they knew of any reason they would have to recuse themselves. He would hate to get to the DeMichelle case on May 20, 2006 and we have an

alternate in there that we just selected and for some unknown reason they would have to recuse themselves. We would then avoid not having a full five member board.

Attorney Taylor asked the Council if he could be excused. Mayor Vinson granted his request. It was 3:40 p.m.

2. Presentation to the Town Council of the results of the Town of Atlantic Beach Pay and Classification Study by the MAPS Group-Becky Veazey-President of The Maps Group

Ms. Veazey stated she wanted to walk everyone through a very informal presentation about the process that was followed when doing the study. She encouraged the Town Council to stop her and ask any questions they may have.

She started with reviewing why an organization would have and need a classification and pay plan. She then went over the steps involved in the classification and pay study. Ms. Veazey discussed the classification and non-classification factors.

Councilman Dawkins stated what he understood Ms. Veazey saying was at some point you have to determine the pay process because you have to put a value on it to the uniqueness of one person accomplishing multiple tasks. He asked if that was incorporated in this study and she said yes that is the classification side. Second they get the salary data and apply that as well and pull the two together.

When she turned from the classification side to the pay side she looked at four compensation program components and their purposes. The four components consist of classification and range revisions, annual market adjustment (cost of living), merit/performance pay and longevity pay.

Ms. Veazey made reference to the pay grades in the chart in the notebooks handed out. She explained how different pay grades could advance. Ms. Veazey stated she hoped everyone understood that turn-over could cost you more than a pay increase. Councilman Creech stated that in the past couple of years the Town has given cost of living raises and not merit raises. Councilman Doe said he has counted thirty different jobs for roughly sixty-five employees. We do not have a lot of turnover. He asked Ms. Veazey what she based her personal opinion on how our Town compares with other towns. She stated that Atlantic Beach is flatter than most towns as far as moving people upward. She said we have a lot of people doing multiple jobs. Councilman Creech asked Ms. Veazey if she was getting her information for a town our size or our competition. She said it was coming from both. Town Manager Chuck Cooper said he thought it was important to understand that the town is struggling with the age old government issue of giving up on merit pay and compressing the staff just like the state

governments do. Ms. Veazey said it is important for the Town to know that a lot of our competitors are doing merit pay. She stated that in N. C. local government jobs are stretched. Our staff deserves to get rewarded for their work.

Councilman Creech said he would love to pay our employees more and that they do not get paid what they are worth. Councilman Doe said he feels our health insurance benefits are an important issue especially with employees who have spouses and children.

Councilwoman Barnes asked that in regards to the benefits, local government has been known for years for underpaying and giving the benefits instead. Can we offer a cafeteria plan, where the employee is given a certain amount of money to use as they see fit? Ms Veazey said yes and we are actually seeing a movement toward that.

Councilman Creech applauded all the work that went into this study but if it were to be done again he would like to know the tax rate of each of the towns. He feels it would be a help in determining where we should be.

Ms. Veazey took everyone through the two implementation strategies. Option 1 states that employee salaries are adjusted to at least the hiring rate and to at least the minimum position. Option 2 states employee salaries are adjusted across the range to reflect length of service based on hire dates. She stated most of our neighbors have Option 2 which puts us at a disadvantage. Ms. Veazey wanted to strongly request that Atlantic Beach implement a good strong performance evaluation and merit pay system. Right now there is no method to move people up. Councilman Doe asked if our employees become eligible at hire for vacation pay. Ms. Veazey said what they recommend is for employees to earn a certain amount of hours per pay period and they could not use it until after six months. Councilman Dawkins asked if there was anything Ms. Veazey thought Atlantic Beach needed to improve. She said the major things were to add a percentage to the 401K plan and backing off on the sick leave. Councilman Dawkins said he had been told that compensation time is mandated by government policies. Ms. Veazey said the positions that are labeled exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act means you do not have to pay them compensation for overtime in any way. The positions that are not labeled exempt, those positions, once they work in excess of a certain amount of hours; you have to compensate them with time and a half, either in pay or time. Councilman Doe asked about the conversion of the Christmas bonus to longevity pay. Ms. Veazey said the majority of the workplaces are doing longevity pay but doing it at Christmas time so it doubles as a Christmas bonus. It is more important to fund merit pay than longevity pay. Councilman Doe asked Mr. Cooper if he could do a presentation that would address the last five to ten employees that the Town has lost and why. He would also like to see exit interviews done. Councilman Bailey asked what would be the Town's next step. Mr. Cooper said it will be used during our budget process.

Ms. Veazey thanked the Mayor, Council and staff for their time. Mayor Vinson thanked her for coming and being so informative.

Mr. Cooper reminded everyone of the meeting tomorrow. The Mayor and Council decided to cancel the meeting tomorrow due to a funeral everyone needed to attend. The decision was to resume the budget workshop meetings next Monday, May 1, 2006 at 3:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Town Council, a motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Creech to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilwoman Barnes, vote was 5-0, unanimous. It was 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

These minutes were approved at the May 15, 2006 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council.

Tootsie Vinson, Mayor

Town Council Meeting
April 25, 2006
Page 6 of 5