

Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Town Council Special Meeting
Thursday, June 15, 2006

The special meeting of the Atlantic Beach Town Council was held Thursday, June 15, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Meeting Room.

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

Members Absent: Councilman Tom Doe

Others Present: Chuck Cooper, Town Manager; Lee Smith, Town Planner; Donna Turner, Inspection Director; Marc Schulze, Public Works Director; Adam Snyder, Fire Chief; Derek Taylor, Town Attorney; Scott Kilpatrick, Police Chief; A.K. Miller, Police Captain; Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Tootsie Vinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Tom Doe was absent.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilwoman Barnes made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilman Bailey, vote was 4-0, unanimous.

Mayor Pro Tem Creech made a motion to go into Public Hearing. Seconded by Councilman Bailey, vote was 4-0, unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing to receive public comment, both written and oral, regarding the Town of Atlantic Beach FY 2006/07 budget and the proposed Stormwater Management Program and related fees.

Mayor Vinson informed the citizens their comments would be limited to three minutes tonight.

Captain Jim Willis stated he would not speak now because he could not begin to cover what he intended to say in three minutes. He said he would sit down and if there was time at the end, he would say what he wanted to say.

1. Claude Andrews, 147 Hoophole Creek, Atlantic Beach, NC

Mr. Andrews stated he was frustrated with the fact he had missed being able to see the budget ahead of time, because he was not able to view it online and other citizens may be in the same situation. He agreed that the three cent increase makes good sense and we receive a good bang for our buck. He said he is a volunteer with the Atlantic Beach Fire Department and he praised the work Chief Adam Snyder and his crew are doing. He would like to see the idea of a Deputy Chief implemented in the department. As far as the Police Department goes he agreed that cameras in the cars and tasers are important for them to have. He would like to see the Police Department get a lift for the new boat.

2. Ron McPherson, 221 Moonlight Drive, Atlantic Beach, NC

Mayor Vinson read an e-mail into the record written by Ron McPherson. He was unable to attend the Public Hearing because he was out of town

(Clerk's note: A copy of the e-mail written by Ron McPherson is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

3. Alan Shelor, Atlantic Beach, NC

Mayor Vinson read into the record a letter written by Alan Shelor. He was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

(Clerk's note: A copy of the letter written by Alan Shelor is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

4. Ann and Earl Batt, 128 Bowen Street, Atlantic Beach, NC

Mayor Vinson read an e-mail into the record written by Ann and Earl Batt.

(Clerk's note: A copy of the e-mail written by Ann and Earl Batt is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

Mayor Vinson said she had received an e-mail from Shirley Harris but she did not have a copy of it and Ms. Harris had stated she was opposed to the tax increase.

Mayor Vinson said to Mr. Jim Willis and the other citizens that were present the reason she and the Council had decided to limit citizens comments tonight to three minutes was because they were not sure how many people would show up. The Mayor stated since there were not many to speak she would like to call on Mr. Willis to come to the podium.

5. Captain James Willis, III, 103 Atlantic Beach Causeway, Atlantic Beach, NC

Captain Willis told the Council he has some ideas on the Stormwater Management Program. He said he knew the Town was wondering where they are going to put this water. He said

behind the dune ridge that was built up by the sand fences is a swell. This swell is about 100 feet from the high water mark. His idea was to run a pipe or two with perforations in them under the swell so the water could seep out. In the pipe would be a well screen to keep the sand from getting in. He feels the Town could get rid of the stormwater this way. Councilman Bailey informed him he had invented something that was already in existence. Captain Willis further stated he did not think it is right to charge a developer an impact fee for stormwater or sewer before the service is even available. As far as the budget goes, he suggested that for the channel dredging we should put in a tunnel and use the sand pumped out to renourish the beach. Regarding the sewer issue, he thinks pipes could be inserted in the street right-of-ways and you would have all that room to dispose of the affluent. He said he just wanted to bring some of these ideas to Council to help save on the budget.

Mayor Vinson asked Claude Andrews if he had anything to add to his comments that were cut off at three minutes. He said looking at the budget everything looked good to him.

Councilman Creech made a motion to go out of Public Hearing and back into open session. Seconded by Councilman Bailey, vote was 4-0, unanimous.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Councilman Bailey stated he had heard a lot of comments regarding the revaluation. The fact the revaluation comes along does not necessarily produce any more income for the Town. It may redistribute where it comes from and it may change one side of the formula. One thing that will have to be displayed to everybody is what revenue neutral is. Back in 2001, Atlantic Beach had a revenue neutral budget that year. There has not been a tax increase since 2002. The Town has been living the last few years on past taxes and you need to know when we spend reserves we are spending back taxes. Councilman Bailey stated if Council could figure out how to not have a tax increase they definitely would. The Council really does not want to raise taxes but they feel like they have an obligation to our employees and to the citizens of the Town to give them the very best and that comes with a price.

Mayor Pro Tem Creech went over figures to show the citizens how the tax rate had fluctuated over the years. He stated the Town had not had an increase in taxes since 2002. The tax rate has been twenty three cents since 2002. He stated he feels this is what needs to be done in order to better serve the Atlantic Beach citizens and employees.

Councilman Dawkins said he agreed with what Councilman Bailey and Mayor Pro Tem Creech said. The only thing he is saying is we do not have to guess what is going to happen in just a few months. The County is going to at least double or triple our taxes. We are the only town that is raising their taxes in Carteret County. He stated he would not be talking at all about not supporting the tax increase unless there was a revaluation knocking at our door.

There are some things that could be delayed. We could still make the same things happen and we will not be taking services away.

2. Set the date for a Special Meeting

Mayor Pro Tem Creech made a motion to set the date for the Budget Approval Meeting on June 29, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0, unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Town Council, Mayor Pro Tem Creech made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Dawkins seconded, and approval was unanimous, 4-0. It was 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kim Glover, Deputy Town Clerk

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

Tootsie Vinson, Mayor