

**TOWN OF BURGAW BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**DATE:** August 9, 2022  
**TIME:** 4:30 PM  
**PLACE:** Historic Train Depot, 115 S. Dickerson Street  
**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Olivia Dawson  
Mayor Pro-tem Wilfred Robbins  
Bill George, Vernon Harrell, Jan Dawson  
**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT:** James Malloy  
**STAFF PRESENT:** James Gantt, Town Manager  
Kristin J. Wells, Town Clerk  
Zachary Rivenbark, Town Attorney  
Wendy Pope, Finance Officer  
Kimberly Rivenbark, Deputy Town Clerk  
Jim Hock, Police Chief/Assistant Town Manager  
Clay Jasper, Deputy Fire Chief  
Louis Hesse, Building Code Administrator  
Alan Moore, Public Works Director  
Cody Suggs, Parks & Recreation Director  
Andrea Correll, Planning Director  
**MEDIA PRESENT:** None  
**INVOCATION:** Reverend Nick Smith  
**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dawson at 4:30 PM and the invocation was led by Reverend Smith.

**Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Harrell made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Harrell made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

- A. Approval of the April 26, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of the June 7, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/REQUESTS**

**Novant Health Pender Medical Center – *Ruth Glaser, President***

Ruth Glaser, President of Novant Health Pender Medical Center, gave an overview of the operations at the medical center, gave historical information, and upcoming changes for the organization.

## **DEPARTMENTAL ITEMS**

### **Finance Department – *Wendy Pope, Director***

#### **Approval of the audit contract for year ending June 30, 2022**

Ms. Pope briefly explained the audit contract for year ending June 30, 2022. There were brief comments on clarification for the cost of the town audit verses the Tourism Development Authority audit fee. Commissioner Robbins made a motion to approve the audit contract presented by Ms. Pope. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

### **Departmental Updates – *Department Heads***

#### **Police Department- *Jim Hock, Police Chief***

- Staff is currently working on new interoffice evidence system.
- The department is working along with other local law enforcement agencies regarding active shooter training.
- Working closely with the filming crews in town with providing traffic control, etc.

Commissioner Harrell asked if the officers had the appropriate equipment for active shooter instances. Chief Hock said every officer has the appropriate piece of equipment needed, including active shooter vests, rifles, etc.

Commissioner Dawson asked about school resource officers at each of the three schools in town limits. Chief Hock said there is one assigned at Burgaw Middle School through the Sheriff's Office. This officer is tasked with checking on the elementary school on a routine basis. Chief Hock said the Early College/Cape Fear Community College has an agreement with the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Dawson asked what needs to be done for the town to request a School Resource Officer (SRO) to be at the elementary school. Chief Hock advised he has talked with the Sheriff's Office about this and was told there were four (4) additional officers requested in the budget, which would allow a deputy at each school in Pender County. The Sheriff's Office was approved for two (2) additional officers, which leaves two (2) schools short of a School Resource Officer. Commissioner Robbins asked if the abutting schools in the Hampstead area share an SRO. Chief Hock said they each have their own SRO. Commissioner Robbins said the town board should petition the county commissioners and Sheriff Cutler to put an SRO in both of our schools in town. He said it is imperative during this day and time. There was discussion about requesting Sheriff Cutler to attend the next board meeting to discuss this request. After some discussion and all board members in agreement, Commissioner Robbins made a motion for the town to request, in writing, an SRO to be present in both C.F. Pope Elementary School and Burgaw Middle School. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harrell and carried by unanimous vote.

### **Public Works Department – Alan Moore, Director**

- Sections of the Clark Street sidewalk will be done soon.
- Planning to pull out all of the tree stumps in the ditch between Bickett Street and Highway 117 soon.

Commissioner Dawson said she had heard discussion about the Public Works staff wanting to wear uniform shorts during the hot weather. Mr. Gantt said shorts are currently not allowed, but the board could change that if they wish. He said he has a safety concern with the staff wearing shorts when weed eating, etc. Attorney Rivenbark added there are OSHA regulations that pants have to be worn when using dangerous chemicals. Commissioner Harrell said we need to address cooling and hydration during the hot weather. He said a disposable cloth in ice cold water to wear around the neck is beneficial. Mr. Moore said staff currently does this. After some discussion, Commissioner George made a motion to allow Public Works staff to wear uniform shorts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

### **Planning Department – Andrea Correll, Planning Director**

Ms. Correll commented on single family houses being built in town. She said the town does not have a right to regulate the design of a house outside of the historic district. She said there have been complaints about the new house being built on Bridgers Street, as well as the two-story houses being built on Fremont Street near Bickett Street.

Commissioner Robbins asked about the various Planning Board meeting cancellations that have occurred over the past several months. He asked if the board can still meet even if there is not any urgent items to discuss. Ms. Correll explained the deadlines for submittals for planning items to be considered by the Planning Board.

### **Building Inspections Department – Louis Hesse, Building Code Administrator**

- Gave an overview of the 19 new homes currently being built.
- Staff is continuing the process for abandoned houses in town.

Mr. Hesse commented on the addition to be put at the Public Works building. He said the contractor for the renovation of the former EMS building can remove the front portion of the building and save the structure for the addition at Public Works. This would lower the costs of the project. There was discussion about the current zoning in the area of Public Works facilities. Since it is a government building, it has been grandfathered into the current zone for many years, but because there will be construction and an addition added to the current facility, the property needs to be addressed with zoning regulations. Therefore, Ms. Correll will place this on a future meeting agenda to include “government buildings” in the zoning district the facility is currently in.

Mr. Hesse said the contractor is gathering cost differences between actual brick or brick veneer facades for the former EMS building. There was brief discussion regarding the aesthetics of the façade options.

**BREAK 5:28 PM – 5:42 PM**

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

**Alex Shevchuk**, 704 E. Kristi Circle, introduced himself to the board and advised he submitted an application for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.

**Michael Pearsall**, 213 S. Bodenheimer Street, said he previously spoke to the board regarding a speed complaint in his neighborhood. He asked if there was anything in place for the town to follow up with the spokesperson about such concerns. If not, he would like the board to consider following up with those who voice concerns to the board. Commissioner Harrell said he would like to make it a town policy to follow up with the citizens who speak to the board and provide an update on the situation. He said he would like us to encourage the people that live here, to participate.

### **Departmental Updates – *Continued***

#### **Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department – Cody Suggs, Director**

- The department is hosting Movies in the Park event series.
- Recreation Coordinator, Jayna Augst, is working on senior programs.
- PARTF Grant results will be held in Raleigh on August 26.
- Basketball and volleyball courts are underway.
- Small group has inquired about small filming around town.
- The town will be featured in Our State magazine on the groundbreaking of the basketball court and volleyball court.

Commissioner Dawson requested Public Works staff to spray for mosquitos during the summer months for outdoor events hosted by Parks, Recreation & Tourism.

Commissioner Harrell congratulated Mr. Suggs on a recent article and interview by the Wilmington Business Journal.

#### **Finance Department – Wendy Pope, Finance Director**

- Finance department is currently working on year-end financial statements in preparation of the audit.
- The town has received the second payment of the ARP funds, which concludes the approximate \$1.2 million received from ARP.

#### **Human Resources Department – Kim Rivenbark, Director**

- Four (4) new hires have come on board since the end of July.
- Currently seeking a Water and Sewer Superintendent

## **Clerk's Office – Kristin Wells, Town Clerk**

- Upcoming shred and e-recycling event will be held on Friday, October 14.

## **ITEMS FROM ATTORNEY – Zachary Rivenbark, Town Attorney**

Attorney Rivenbark stated he only had items for closed session.

## **ITEMS FROM MANAGER – James Gantt, Town Manager**

### **Discussion about reducing speed limits in town**

Mr. Gantt said he and Chief Hock have researched the speed issue in the area of Satchwell Street and Bodenheimer Street, in result of the complaint from Mr. Pearsall. Chief Hock briefly explained the speed measuring device that was used to collect speed data. He said the result showed an average speed for Satchwell Street of 28 miles per hour. Mr. Gantt gave additional information regarding speeding in town limits, based on state statute. He said the state allows towns to modify certain town streets, such as reducing speed limits in certain areas, as long as the streets have signs specifying the speed limit. There was much discussion about options for helping the speeding issues on particular streets in town. Commissioner Dawson said she does not have a problem with reducing the speed limit to 25 miles per hour on residential streets throughout town. Mr. Pearsall voiced his concern regarding the demographics of different neighborhoods. Commissioner Harrell suggested to try the 25 miles per hour speed limit, especially on Satchwell Street, and if it hasn't worked after a couple of months, then look at speed humps. Mr. Gantt gave several options of solutions, such as bringing back certain streets recommended by staff and data, changing the speed limit on all residential streets, and only reducing the speed limit on Satchwell Street. Mr. Gantt said we could phase in the 25 miles per hour throughout town, but the total cost would be approximately \$15k to purchase the new speed limit signs for all residential streets. Commissioner Robbins suggested to reduce the speed limit on Satchwell Street for now. Commissioner George said he would like to cover the whole town by reducing the limit to 25 miles per hour, and put the signs up on certain streets that are a problem. After much discussion, Commissioner Harrell made a motion to reduce the speed limit on Satchwell Street, between Smith Street and Durham Street, to 25 miles per hour. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robbins. Commissioners Harrell, Robbins, Dawson and Malloy voted "aye" and Commissioner George voted "nay." Motion carried. Commissioner George said he is not against the speed limit reduction on Satchwell Street, but would rather see it reduced for the whole town and place signs on streets where they are needed. Chief Hock said staff will handle educating the residents on Satchwell Street. Mr. Gantt said staff can bring back any additional streets that may need to be looked at. Commissioner Robbins asked if the new 25 miles per hour speed limit signs could be in a different color other than white. Mr. Gantt said the signs must be white, per state requirements. Attorney Rivenbark said the small orange flags could be placed on them since they will be new. He also added we might need to look at the 20 miles per hour signs in the downtown area to make sure they are up to code.

### **Update on current town projects**

### **NC DOT Meeting regarding safety concerns**

Mr. Gantt said he and Chief Hock met with NC DOT representatives regarding safety issues around town that involved state roads. He said one of the topics was traffic calming ideas for Wilmington Street since this is a state street. Mr. Gantt suggested bulb outs and a bike lane designated along the street. The state does not have funds available for this project, so the town would have to seek other options. Mr. Gantt gave a brief overview of ideas for the calming measures. Commissioner Robbins said we have been talking about this for a long time and need to move forward with a plan. Commissioner Dawson asked, if the town has the money to take care of this project, will the town have to go through the NC DOT process. Mr. Gantt said he does not believe it will need to be engineered and said that NC DOT will not have a problem with approval. There was discussion about the concern of eliminating parking spaces near Cripple Creek Corner. Commissioner Robbins made a motion to move forward with the idea and allow Mr. Gantt to bring back options for consideration. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harrell and carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Gantt said he also talked with NC DOT about a signal at Wilmington Street and Highway 117. He said NC DOT is looking into the data that was recently collected in the traffic impact analysis for the future ABC Store proposed in the area. There was also discussion with NC DOT about a designated turning lanes at this intersection. Mr. Gantt said they will look into this, as well as placing signs and repainting the crosswalk at the judicial annex. He said they also discussed putting a crosswalk across Wilmington Street in the middle of the block in front of the Old Jail. The town would pay for the cost of doing the curb cuts and ADA pads. No one was opposed to these projects and Mr. Gantt will provide more information when he hears back from NC DOT.

Mr. Gantt said he has looked into the 18-wheeler issue on Dickerson Street that has previously been discussed. This is a state road and changes will need to be taken to NC DOT for approval. Mr. Gantt suggested we do away with the right and left turn lanes, making it only one lane, and still allowing parking with a wider parking area. None of the board voiced opposition. Commissioner Harrell asked if this solution would eliminate the visibility issue with vehicles exiting the townhome parking lot. Mr. Gantt said the parking would be re-done to NC DOT standards so parking would only be allowed a certain distance away from the driveways. All board members were in favor of Mr. Gantt working with NC DOT on this idea.

Chief Hock added the NC DOT representative is looking to see if there is any possible way to move up the Highway 53/Wilmington Street project (formally known as the round-a-bout project) on their schedule due to safety concerns near the intersection of Wright Street and Wilmington Street. Mr. Gantt said the project was categorized as a streetscape project and that is how it is labeled on NC DOT's project schedule. The representative will look into possibly changing the category so the project could begin sooner.

## **ITEMS FROM MAYOR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **Consideration of appointing one (1) member to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee**

Commissioner Robbins made a motion to appoint Jennifer Augi to fill the vacancy on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson. Commissioners Robbins, Dawson, George and Malloy voted “aye.” Commissioner Harrell voted “nay.” Motion carried. Commissioner Harrell requested a letter be sent to the applicants not selected.

There was brief discussion about the absentee policy for the committee. Mr. Suggs will look into this and bring back to the board if needed.

**Discussion about cleaning of the downtown sidewalks and replacement of electrical outlets for Christmas decorations – *Mayor Dawson and Commissioner Dawson, Beautification Committee***

Mayor Dawson spoke about the cleaning of the downtown sidewalks and said the Beautification Committee wanted to bring this project to the board for input and possible funding. Mr. Moore advised the quote received was \$.18 per square foot. Commissioner Robbins suggested to have the sidewalks cleaned at least once a year, maybe twice a year. He also said it might be a good idea for the town to purchase a less expensive pressure washer to spot clean as needed. After some discussion, the board requested the Beautification Committee determine which sidewalks to be cleaned and bring back to the board.

Mayor Dawson commented on the upcoming Christmas decorations and said Mr. Myslow advised some of the overhead electrical outlets are not working above the holly trees downtown. Staff will look into this.

**Other items to be announced**

Mayor Dawson thanked staff for informing the board of events and changes. She requested staff let her know when there are interoffice meetings for her to attend.

Commissioner Dawson said a lady fell on a raised area of sidewalk on Wright Street in front of the Harrell house and asked Mr. Moore to look at grinding this down.

**CLOSED SESSION – 7:15 PM**

Commissioner Harrell made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NC GS 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney/Client privilege. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

**OPEN SESSION – 8:09 PM**

Commissioner Robbins made a motion to return to open session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

Upon reconvening to open session, Commissioner Robbins made a motion to move forward with hiring School Resource Officers and work with the county in placing the School Resource Officers in our two schools in Burgaw. The motion was seconded by Commissioner George and

carried by unanimous vote. Commissioner Robbins requested the Burgaw Police Department to patrol through the school properties on a routine basis, including Cape Fear Community College, Burgaw Middle School and C.F. Pope Elementary School. Chief Hock briefly explained the security measures already in place with the community college. He will meet with Sheriff Cutler soon regarding the School Resource Officers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Harrell made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

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G. Olivia Dawson, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kristin J. Wells, Town Clerk