



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

February 26, 2024

Board of Commissioners Present:

Mike Allen, Mayor
Chuck Bost, Mayor Pro Tem
Ryan Merrill, Commissioner
A. Hunter Smith, Commissioner

Board of Commissioners Absent:

Morgan Mehler, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Brenda Williams, Finance Clerk /Deputy Town Clerk
Ian McLeod, Parks and Recreation Assistant
Brenda Hewlett, Admin. Support Specialist
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Kemmy Goodson, Town CPA
Adrienne Harrington, Planning Consultant (via telecommunications)

Others Present to Address the Board:

Debby Warren, 10093 Winding Branches Dr., SE, Belville, NC 28451
Lavar Marlow, Candidate for Board of Education
Deana Slate, Candidate for Register of Deeds

ITEM # 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Mike Allen called the February 26, 2024, Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Welcomed all, a quorum was present.

ITEM # 2 – INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Allen led the invocation asking for guidance for our Town, protection of our residents, police and servicemen, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to excuse Commissioner Morgan Mehler. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**



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ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Agenda as presented.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the February 7, 2024, BOC Special Meeting Minutes
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Code Enforcement Report / Street Maintenance Report

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Debby Warren, a resident of Belville, addressed the board to talk about drainage problems. She understands that the Town is doing a Stormwater Feasibility Study, but she is worried that we will not see needed improvements before the hurricane season begins. She would like the Commissioners to consider adopting an ordinance to force homeowners to clean out their swales/ditches before an impending storm event occurs, which causes flooding and damage in the Town. Ms. Warren was adamant that fines should be imposed if the homeowners do not comply. She reminded the Board that ‘the clock is ticking,’ and while she is glad to see the Feasibility Study, which will detect the problem areas, the real problem is getting these areas repaired. Mayor Allen reiterated that we are aware of her concerns. The study should give us a clear picture of the problem areas and he hopes that once it is completed, that the homeowners will join with us to allow us to correct the drainage problem areas.

2. Two candidates wished to speak in regard to the upcoming election on March 5th.

a. Lavar Marlowe who is a candidate for Board of Education, District 1. Mr. Marlowe expressed he is a life-long resident of Brunswick County, who works at UNCW, and is a pastor at Pleasant View Baptist Church. He encouraged everyone to vote.

b. Deanna Slate is a candidate for the Register of Deeds. She revealed some of her experience in IT management in the medical field, and handling confidential documents, she is asking for our support.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE A MOTION** to close the Public Comment period.
VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.

ITEM #6 – PRESENTATIONS

a. *Dawn-Michelle Blalock CEO of Boys and Girls Club of Southeast NC* informed the Board that the Boys and Girls Club has recently expanded to two schools in Brunswick County; Town Creek Middle School and Supply Elementary. She conveyed the mission and focus of the Club, and how they work with children and teens after school to focus on academic success, character and leadership building, along with recreation. They also provide tutoring and remediation targeting those who are behind in



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reading and math and help with workforce readiness and development. Ms. Blalock pointed out that both Commissioner Chuck Bost and Town Manager Athina Williams are members, and she appreciates that the Town has allowed their organization to meet here.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve Resolution **R24-08** Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Expressing Support for the Boys and Girls Club. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

b. Austin Eubanks, CPA, CFE at Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., PA joined via telecommunications and presented the findings of the FYE June 30, 2023, audit. Their findings were positive, and he detailed how the general fund is steadily growing each year, describing that the Town could function for two years without having more income. All departments are meeting the standards, and he recommended that the Town send a letter regarding two remarks as suggested.

c. R24-06 Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Brenda Williams Ninth Work Anniversary.

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R24-06** Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Acknowledging Brenda Williams' Ninth Work Anniversary with Appreciation and Thanks.

Mayor Allen presented Brenda Williams, Finance Clerk / Deputy Town Clerk with her Resolution and affirmed that he is very happy to have Brenda, with all her experience, here for nine years.

ITEM #7 – APPOINTMENT

a. ABC Board Vacancies

Mayor Allen acknowledged that we had three applicants for two vacancies. He explained that two of the applicants are already on the board, Richard Trexler and Gene Ward, and we have a third applicant, Gordon Burnette. Mayor Allen asked Mr. Gene Ward if he would like to come forward, as he was the only applicant present. Mr. Gene Ward stated that he enjoyed being on the ABC Board for the last three years, and he would like to continue if the board so desires. Mayor Allen opined that he would like to nominate the two candidates who were already on the board.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to appoint Mr. Richard Trexler and Mr. Gene Ward to serve a 3-year term on the ABC Board, which will expire on February 26, 2027. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.** Mayor Allen administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Gene Ward.

ITEM #8 – OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on Belville Riverwalk Project

1. Upcoming Events - Ms. Brenda Hewlett addressed the board, discussing the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt and Movie Night on March 23rd. Ms. Hewlett shared that the Easter Egg Hunt is fully funded,



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as T-Mobile has donated items to fill the eggs, and that we will be showing the Super Mario Brothers Movie. Mayor Allen thanked Ms. Brenda Hewlett and the Parks and Recreation Board for all they do and encouraged everyone to attend.

2. REC DESK – Recreation Assistant Ian McLeod gave a presentation on our new reservation software, REC DESK, a user-friendly software, which will streamline online shelter reservations, vendor applications, rentals and tours sponsored by the Town. We are promoting this on social media and have already had many people sign up for the March 23rd events. Town Manager, Athina Williams wished to thank Ian for his hard work getting this up and running and believes it will be very convenient for our residents.

ITEM #9 – REGULAR AGENDA

a. Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington joined via telecommunications to give the Project updates.

1. Multi-Use Paths

Last month the WMPO awarded almost \$547,000 to fill the funding gap for the Multi-Use Paths. All funds are now secured. We are in the process of developing a contract with NCDOT. We look forward to the Construction Kickoff in March or April.

2. Stormwater Feasibility Study – As mentioned this evening, engineers from WithersRavenel had an initial meeting with us on January 6th. We sent them previous studies, and met again on February 8th, when they did site visits to some of the problem areas for data collection, and now they are working on a draft.

3. Riverwalk Phase II – Pre-construction work is on track, bid for construction in October 2024. May 2025 is our target completion date.

4. Gullah Geechee Heritage Trail Feasibility Study– We had one round of Public Comments which recommended trail alignments, we plan to set up a table at Easter Egg hunt.

5. Riverfront Vision Document – Last week Mayor Allen, Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost, Town Manager Athina Williams and other staff checked out the NCSU Coastal design lab. The students' presentations gave their vision and insight. They got feedback from us, and will revise the plan, with a final presentation due at the end of April.

6. NC133 Widening Project – The latest update was provided in the Agenda packets.

Mayor Allen declared he is looking forward to the ribbon cuttings for these projects. He gave a Transportation Update on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge progress.



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b. Town Manager Athina Williams introduced proposed edits to the town's Business Policy and Procedure Manual, which include but are not limited to Cell Phone Policy, Vehicle Idling Policy, Social Media and Financial Management policies. This document which she has been working on with Richard Trexler will be presented in a draft at the May 20, 2024, BOC meeting.

c. R24-07 Resolution Directing the Town Clerk to Investigate a Petition for Annexation Received Under N.C.G.S. § 160A-31 for the Yeoman Property 10039 Blackwell Road, SE.

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve **R24-07** Resolution Directing the Town Clerk to Investigate a Petition for Annexation Received Under N.C.G.S. § 160A-31 for the Yeoman Property 10039 Blackwell Road, SE. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #11 – CLOSED SESSION

- a. **N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)** – To consult with the attorney including litigation; and
N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(4) – To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries.

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to go into Closed Session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to come back into Open Session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #12 – OTHER ITEMS ND REPORTS

- a. Town Attorney Norwood Blanchard – informed all that in the Closed Session we discussed potential litigation, but no action was taken in the Closed Session.
- b. Board of Commissioners – None
- c. Mayor Pro Tem - None
- d. Mayor – Mayor Allen thanked everyone for attending.
- e. Town Manager – Thanked everyone.

ITEM #10 – ADJOURNMENT

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to Adjourn the Meeting. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Minutes Compiled by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:



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Mike Allen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk