



ORIGINAL

**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**July 22, 2024**

Board of Commissioners Present:

Mike Allen, Mayor  
Chuck Bost, Mayor Pro Tem  
Ryan Merrill, Commissioner  
Morgan Mehler, Commissioner  
Hunter Smith, Commissioner

Board of Commissioners Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager  
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk  
Jim Bucher, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Brenda Williams, Finance Clerk  
Kerry Wooding, Deputy Finance Officer  
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner  
Ian McLeod, Event Coordinator  
Brenda Hewlett, Admin Support Specialist  
Kemmy Goodson, Town Accountant  
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney  
Charles Baldwin, Attorney  
Adrienne Harrington, Planning Consultant  
Nick Canon, Social Media Consultant

Others Present to Address the Board:

Amy Feath, Executive Director and Mary Beth Koehler, Child Medical Exam Supervisor of Carousel  
Child Advocacy Center  
Joe Henson, ABC Board Chairman

**ITEM # 1 – CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Mike Allen called the July 22, 2024, Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed all. A quorum was present.

**ITEM #2 – INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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**ACTION** – Mayor Allen led the invocation asking for guidance for our Town, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Allen added a Presentation to the Town Manager for 18 years of service as ITEM #6d.

**ACTION** – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Agenda with this amendment adding ITEM #6d. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

**ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of the June 24, 2024, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes.
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Code Enforcement Report / Street Maintenance Report
- e. After Action Report – Food Truck Rodeo

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

**ITEM #5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**ACTION** – Commissioner Hunter Smith **MADE THE MOTION** to open the Public Comments. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

No one was present who wished to speak.

**ACTION** – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to close the Public Comments. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

**ITEM #6 – PRESENTATIONS**

- a. Carousel Child Advocacy Center

Amy Feath, Executive Director of Carousel Child Advocacy Center provided an overview of the services provided by the Center and was joined by Mary Beth Koehler, Child Medical Exam Supervisor who helped to explain how they operate. The Center operates in Pender, New Hanover and Brunswick County to help children who deal with abuse and works to try to get justice for them. The Center partners with law enforcement and DSS to assess and investigate these cases, and make sure the child is not traumatized. They recently achieved a national accreditation in Brunswick County. Discussion ensued. Mayor Mike Allen thanked them for sharing their information, and for all they do.

- b. Social Media Update

Nick Canon, Social Media Consultant summarized the social media platforms and activities over the past 6 months and compared the figures with the previous year. Facebook. Instagram, X (previously twitter),





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LinkedIn and Next Door. Nick conveyed how many impressions and interactions the Town received on each platform and shared some of the most popular posts. Belville's newsletter has a high open rate on Constant Contact, compared with the industry standard. Nick disclosed that we often use the social media to share information, happenings, meetings and events in the town and revealed the goals for social media in the future. Mayor Allen thanked Nick for the report, and Commissioner Morgan Mehler added himself as a follower.

**c. ABC Report**

Joe Henson, Chairman of the ABC Board updated the board on the new legislation approved by the General Assembly of North Carolina. Some of the legislation involved special events permits, and a major change was the allowance of those who sell single servings to purchase directly from any board, rather than purchasing from the County of residence. Mr. Henson conveyed that the closure of Old River Road has caused about 3 percent less sales, as people do not like the inconvenience of going further to turnaround. Mr. Henson reiterated that the ABC Board is ready to move forward with building a store, but they have delayed the purchase of land, and are waiting for direction from the Board of Commissioners. Attorney Norwood Blanchard deliberated with Joe Henson on a question. Mr. Henson is waiting for an answer from the ABC Board. Mayor Allen set up an appointment to meet with Mr. Henson on Friday, at 3:00 p.m.

**d. Recognition of Athina Williams on her 18 Year Work Anniversary**

**ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost MADE THE MOTION to approve Resolution R24-28 A Resolution By the Belville Board of Commissioners Expressing Sincere Appreciation and Gratitude to Town Manager Athina Williams for her 18 Years of Service to the Town of Belville. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

In grateful recognition for her 18 years of service, Mayor Mike Allen presented Athina with her Resolution R24-28 and flowers and indicated 'we couldn't do run the Town without you, and we are looking forward to at least another 20 years.' Mayor Allen resounded that Athina takes charge and rarely ever has to come to me with a problem, she handles it, and we appreciate her. ABC Board Chairman Joe Henson added that Ms. Athina Williams had been here for three years when he joined the ABC Board, and the Town would probably not be here today, without her. He repeated that she really cares about this Town. Mayor Allen agreed that she has accomplished so much for the Town.

**ITEM #7 – OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Update on Belville Riverwalk Project / Upcoming Events**

**1. Riverwalk Phase II / Park Garage / Park Entrance**

Town Manager Athina Williams spoke of the upcoming events, the Fall Festival October 5th and the Charity Golf Tournament on October 28th. Ian McLeod, Event Coordinator gave specifics on the Sponsorship levels. We have six teams signed up and three sponsors so far. We have WithersRavenel,





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First Bank, Westport Lofts promoting, and Brunswick Beer and Cider will provide lunch and beer at the golf tournament. If successful, we hope to do other golf events. Brunswick Beer and Cider has our brand, "Belville Blonde" beer. The rain date for the golf tournament will be November 17<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued about sponsorship opportunities deadlines, and possibly changing our October meeting to another date.

Town Manager Athina Williams relayed that the Belville Riverwalk CAMA application has been submitted, which can take up to 120 days, we did some preliminary work in advance. Jim Bucher reported on the Park Improvements. Jim communicated that he has been repairing the trails and upgrading the entrance to the trailhead at the Belville Riverwalk, and we moved it closer to the parking lot. The garage has been completed, and right now we are working to get electricity and lights. We talked with the vendors about loading from the front of the market, instead of behind it.

**2. Update on Stormwater Feasibility Study and Drainage**

Jim Bucher commented that we are responding to a drainage complaint just past the Olde Towne Park entrance. The water is not flowing, and there seems to be a gap where the old drainpipe once was. Jim has been in touch with NCDOT, who are getting the State's permission to repair the pipe, and they will keep us in the loop.

Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington updated the board on the progress of the Stormwater Feasibility Study started in January. She shared some of the results from the public input, which highly supported almost all the measures to mitigate the drainage issues. They are going to take the responses and cross reference the areas identified on the map. The next step will be learning how we can resolve some of these problems. Mayor Allen indicated that he is looking forward to learning what we can do to alleviate these problems. Mrs. Harrington noted that she would also like to see an education component added to the report, so we can update the public about improvements, and share with them what their responsibilities are.

**ITEM #8 – REGULAR AGENDA**

**a. Transportation Update / Widening Project / MUPs**

Mayor Mike Allen remarked that Governor Roy Cooper was here Monday to give us an update on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. \$242 Million dollars for the Cape Fear Bridge replacement was received from federal funds. We are hoping now to get some state funds, and our project is now a priority. Ms. Harrington noted that this is one of the biggest 'wins' for funding our area has seen in a long time.

Adrienne updated the board on the ongoing projects. The Multi-use path is moving forward. We have a gap between the apartments and the elementary school. We are going to apply for WMPO funds, which are 80/20 match for this section. Unfortunately, this section (0.2miles) is over wetlands and needs to be elevated and a boardwalk, and our cost estimate is from \$900,000 to \$1 Million. The Gullah Geechee trail is also going through this area, so we are hoping the funds will be supportive of this. Mayor Allen mentioned we do not know what we would do without you either, Adrienne.

**ITEM #9 – CLOSED SESSION**

N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney Consultation N.C.G.S. 153A-148.1(a) – Property Acquisition





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**ACTION** – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to go into closed session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

**ITEM #10 – OTHER ITEMS & REPORTS**

**ACTION** – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to come back into open session. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

- a. Town Attorney Norwood Blanchard explained that we discussed the Holt, Weatherly and USG law suits, and potential purchase of property. No action was taken in the closed session.
- b. Town Manager shared a photo of the clearing area that is across from Westport Lofts. Mayor Allen commented this is a very nice area that will be on the Riverwalk Phase II, and I think it will be enjoyed by everyone.
- c. Board of Commissioners
- d. Mayor Pro Tem
- e. Mayor – We need a motion on the costs of renovations to the Town Hall. Town Manager Athina Williams answered that is approximately \$40,000.

**ACTION** – Mayor Mike Allen **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the renovations costing approximately \$40,000. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

**ITEM #10 – ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION** – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **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:

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Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

