



**BELVILLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

November 18, 2024

Board of Commissioners Present:

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

Board of Commissioners Absent:

Hunter Smith, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner
Brenda Williams, Finance Clerk
Kerry Wooding, Deputy Finance Officer
Ian McLeod, Event Coordinator
Jace Sanchez, Administrative Assistant
Kemmy Goodson, Town Accountant
Norwood Blanchard, Town Attorney
Nick Cannon, Smart Moves Consulting
Adrienne Harrington, Smart Moves Consulting (via telecommunications)

Others Present to Address the Board:

D. Kamili Anderson, Vice Chair & Publicity/Promotions Manager North Carolina Rice Festival

ITEM # 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Mike Allen called the November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed all. A quorum was present.

ITEM #2 – INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ACTION – Mayor Allen led the invocation asking for prayers for fire, rescue and service workers, and those protecting our country. The invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Allen requested to add one item under PRESENTATIONS #C a resolution honoring Commissioner Morgan Mehler.



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

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to excuse Commissioner Hunter Smith. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the October 21, 2024, BOC Regular Meeting Minutes.
- b. Tax Collector Report
- c. Finance Report
- d. Code Enforcement Report – Street Maintenance Report
- e. Planning Activity Report
- f. Special Events Report
- g. After Action Report – Monster Mash (Trunk or Treat & Halloween Movie Night)
- h. After Action Report – Senior Fishing Day
- i. After Action Report – Veterans Day

ACTION – Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda and commended the staff for their hard work on these reports, and the After-Action reports. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

ACTION – Mayor Mike Allen asked if anyone wished to speak, hearing none, he **MADE THE MOTION** to close the Public Comments. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #6 – PRESENTATIONS

- a. Nick Cannon of Smart Moves Consulting relayed his synopsis of our Social Media Report to the board. The report tracks all the progress and engagement of viewers to all of our social media platforms, including: Facebook (2), Instagram, X (Twitter), Constant Contact, Next Door, and LinkedIn. He explained that we share different content on each platform, and try to highlight all the happenings, milestones and achievements of the Town, and also provide links to direct people to our Website. Nick reported that we are getting a lot of new viewers. Nick also is responsible for the monthly newsletter, a mass communication device, which is opened by a lot of people (with a better rate than the industry). This shows people are interested in the content, and many are viewing it on their laptops or computers. Town Manager Athina Williams inquired if we are able to see the demographics of the new viewers. Nick relayed that on NextDoor and Facebook he would generalize that it appears that viewers are about 40 and over with the majority being women. Mayor Pro Tem commented that the newsletter seems fresh and engaging, but the date it is released seems to be different each month, and he would like to get it back to the first of the month, if possible. Mayor Allen commented that Nick is doing a great job, and the social media helps to engage residents and citizens of North Brunswick County and show people that Belville has a lot to offer.



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- b. D. Kamili Anderson, Vice Chair and Publicity/Promotions Manager for the Rice Festival discussed the purpose and history of the Rice Festival, touching on the Gullah Geechee cultural heritage, and explaining that rice from the plantations were the main export, and there once were about 60 plantations were in this area. The festival will be held in Brunswick Town and is expecting a broader reach this year, with last year bringing between 3,000 and 4,000 people. The Rice Festival has many different events. The 2025 festival will be held in March. One event will be held at the historic Reeves Chapel in Navassa, which is being restored by the NC Coastal Land Trust, a process which has taken many years. The Rice Festival is asking all the Towns in North Brunswick County to come together to help sponsor this event. Ms. Anderson stated that the Rice Festival is a non-profit, and we try to keep the costs as low as possible. Some of our sponsors are Town of Leland, First Bank, State of North Carolina, AARP, Orton Plantation Foundation, Brunswick County and others.

Mayor Allen commented that it took very talented people of African ancestry to grow the rice, and it was the main export of this area, known as 'Carolina Gold,' and indicated we would like to donate, and asked the Town Manager if we have funds in the budget. Town Manager Athina Williams indicated that we would need to make a budget amendment, as our donations category now shows a zero balance. Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost suggested that perhaps we could be in the 'Planters' (\$1,000) or 'Growers' (\$2,500) category of sponsorship, but asked that we table it for now, as it requires a budget amendment. Mayor Allen said that we will put in on the Agenda for next month, if Kamili Anderson would like to come back, and thanked her for her information.

- c. Mayor Allen read **R24-38 Resolution Expressing Gratitude and Appreciation to Commissioner Morgan Mehler for Six Years of Service and Dedication to the Town of Belville.** Mayor Allen thanked Commissioner Morgan Mehler for his exemplary service, for serving as our commissioner for the last six years, for being our financial liaison and his unselfish commitment to the Town of Belville. Commissioner Mehler's legal background and experience has been very beneficial to the Town. Mayor Allen presented a plaque and thanked Morgan Mehler for serving our community and his valuable contributions and encouraged our staff and citizens to show their appreciation and support.

ITEM #7 – OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update on the Belville Riverwalk

Ian McLeod, Event Coordinator, gave an update on Upcoming events and happenings at the Belville Riverwalk. Ian summarized the recent events including the Fall Festival with over 3,145 attendees, the Trunk or Treat with a phenomenal turnout, and the Fall Movie Night, which was also successful. We are still doing the accounting of the Golf Tournament, as we had many sponsors at various levels, and even sold the locally made 'Belville Blonde.' Ian added that this event was the Town Manager's idea, and admitted he did not know the total yet, but 'we are going to donate a big chunk of change.' We will have the After-Action Report for the Golf Tournament finalized for our BOC Meeting in December.



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We are making great progress on the garage, and Jim has started the installation of the Christmas lights, for the Christmas festival. We also took down one tree that was uprooted and leaning on the boardwalk. We will have a Christmas Village, a train ride from 10-3 on the north side of the park, a search for Rudolph the Red nose reindeer, Christmas craft vendors, and some interesting stops for the train. Our Parks and Recreation Board and Chairman Vince Matthews have been putting that together. We have decided not to show a Christmas movie, as it is such a long day, but may bring it back next year on a different date.

We are continuing to help move Town Hall to its new location in the Waterford. Angie's Produce is done for the season, but Seaview Crab will remain a little longer. Fun Time Ice Cream will close on 11/25, In April they will have a new trailer with additional food offerings at the park.

Mr. McLeod continued sharing that we have a Savannah, Ga trip coming up December 13th, and so far, 71 people are going. Our next step is a pre-trip meeting. We are advertising for a New Orleans trip in March, with airfare included, a maximum of 42 people, and we already have 17 interested. These trips add money to Parks and Recreation, and we are getting some repeat travelers from our Nashville trip. We will also have a Springtime movie around Easter.

Commissioner Morgan Mehler opined that the Golf Tournament was well executed and was great, and he has played in many all over the country, and he thought the Belville Classic was better than most. Commissioner Ryan Merrill said it was outstanding, with great coordination, and he thought we really hit the nail on the head with this event, and we appreciate all the hard work that went into it. Mr. Ian McLeod added that we had 31 teams, and it was very successful. Our events this year have raised the attendance on each event.

Mayor Allen indicated that he was as proud as can be, loves raising money for our community, and Belville is still making things happen, and he thanked the staff for all that they do.

ITEM #8 – REGULAR AGENDA

a. Transportation Update – *Multi-use Path Update*

Planning Consultant, Adrienne Harrington, joined via telecommunications to give the Transportation and Stormwater Feasibility Study Update.

We can celebrate that the WMPO agreed to award \$720,000 for the gap in the Multi-Use Path which occurs from the current path to the Westport Lofts. Although it is only 0.2 miles long, it traverses over wetlands, and is a very expensive section. 80% of the total cost was covered by WMPO. We have the award letter in hand, and our next step will be to get an engineering firm onboard so we can move to construction.

Stormwater Feasibility Study Update – This project, started in January with a compilation of studies, and we just had a site visit in November. Our WithersRavenel engineering team is pulling together the findings and identifying areas of concern, with the goal to let us know how we can improve the stormwater drainage in the Town. They will bring the proposed improvements to Town Staff, and then we can proceed to look for more funds to help resolve these issues.



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Riverwalk Extension Phase II - We are wrapping up the engineering design and permitting process, and the CAMA permit should be finalized in December. Next step will be getting a draft of bid documents, for expected construction around May. We have the project divided into phases. We have the funds for Phase 1, which is the natural surface trail, which includes the Southern riverwalk over the water with one gazebo. Phase 2 will be a Northern Riverwalk over the water with one gazebo, and the final Phase 3, will be a connector riverwalk constructed of wood and a concrete-like substance between the two gazebos. Phases 2 and 3 will be dependent on funds secured.

NC-133 Crossing Project – This new project will relocate the existing park entrance to make the new entrance directly across from the south exit of Belville Elementary School, which will include a traffic signal and crosswalk. Also included will be the Redesign of the park parking lot to maximize the number of available parking spaces. We were awarded 80% of the cost from the WMPO last year. Once the agreement is finalized, we can start on some engineering services for this project.

Other Transportation Projects – NC133 will be closed near Funston Road, ½ mile stretch, while they improve the infrastructure to solve the flooding issues. Rerouting for this project will be detoured through Boiling Springs area. Work began in October and will continue through August 2025.

Mayor Mike Allen thanked Planning Consultant Adrienne Harrington for her outstanding job reporting on the progress of these projects, and also helping us obtain the funding for them. Mayor Allen would also like to include the visitor center from the NC State report as part of the engineering design for this project.

b. Annexation petition - Gregory Poole Equipment Company

R24-46 – Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Directing the Town Clerk to Investigate A Petition for Contiguous Annexation Submitted by Jim Beck of the Gregory Poole Equipment Company for Parcel ID #04700035 in accordance with our Agreement.

Mayor Mike Allen explained that Gregory Poole has been in the County for a long time and worked with us by agreement to take in the road, after they made improvements. He would like to direct the staff to go forward with the Annexation Petition.

ACTION - Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Bost **MADE A MOTION** to accept **Resolution #R24-46 A Resolution by the Belville Board of Commissioners Directing the Town Clerk to Investigate A Petition for Contiguous Annexation Submitted by Jim Beck of the Gregory Poole Equipment Company for Parcel ID #04700035 in accordance with our Agreement. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

c. Approval of the Proposed Calendars for 2025

1. Approval of the Planning and Zoning Calendar
2. Approval of the Board of Adjustment Calendar
3. Approval of the Parks and Recreation Calendar
4. Approval of the Budget Calendar
5. Approval of the PB & PZ Submittal Calendar

Town Staff had prepared proposed dates for the calendars which have been approved by the individual boards. Commissioner Ryan Merrill mentioned that the golf tournament was on the same day as a



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meeting, perhaps we could move that meeting to the Monday before October 27, which would be October 20th.

The Board of Commissioners agreed. Planner, Chad Staradumsky informed the board that that change would also involve changing the PB & PZ Submittal Calendar, so he will revise that calendar based on the new dates.

Town Manager Athina Williams mentioned that the Budget Calendar is included, and our Budget Meeting is set for March 22nd if that works for everyone. The Board agreed.

ACTION – Commissioner Morgan Mehler **MADE THE MOTION** to approve all the Calendars listed with the change of the October BOC meeting, and the other changes to the PB and PZ Submittal Calendar that will be revised. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #9 – CLOSED SESSION

- a. N.C.G.S § 143-318.11(a)(3) – To consult with the attorney including litigation Urban Smart Growth 15 CVS 1217 and N.C.G.S. § 143A-159.1(a) – To discuss matters relating to acquisition of property.

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

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

ITEM #10 – OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS

- a. Town Attorney Norwood Blanchard – informed all that in the Closed Session we discussed Urban Smart Growth 15 CVS 1217 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 – None.

ITEM #10 – ADJOURNMENT

ACTION – Commissioner Ryan Merrill **MADE THE MOTION** to Adjourn the Meeting. **VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Minutes Compiled by Sharon A. Niemann



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SIGNED:

Mike Allen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk