BELVILLE PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES **March 4, 2025**

Planning Board Members Present:

Scott Milligan, Chairman
Joe Boyd, Vice Chairman
Jonas Williams, Member
Theresa Heath, Member
John Weaver, Member

Planning Board Members Absent:

Kimberly Ganey-Phillips, Member
Dean St. John, Member

Staff Present:
Athina Williams, Town Manager
Sharon Niemann, Town Clerk
Chad Staradumsky, Town Planner

Others Present to Address the Board:

None

ITEM #1 AND #2 – CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Scott Milligan called the Planning Board Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ACTION –Mr. Jonas Williams **MADE THE MOTION** to excuse board members, Kimberly Ganey-Phillips and Dean St. John. Mrs. Theresa Heath **SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION – Mr. Jonas Williams **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the Agenda. Vice Chairman Joe Boyd **SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION – Vice Chairman Joe Boyd **MADE THE MOTION** to approve the February 4, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Jonas Williams **SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

ITEM #5 – OLD BUSINESS

a. ZTA 2025-01- Major Subdivision Fence Discussion

Town Planner Chad Staradumsky who had introduced the subject of Major subdivision perimeter fences at the February meeting came forward to continue this discussion. He summarized from the previous meeting that one subdivision community, Highland Shores is planning to replace their current fence around the neighborhood's perimeter, which is eight feet tall, and they are asking if the replacement can be ten feet. The Planning Board must decide if they would recommend an eight-foot or 10-foot fence. Whichever we decide, will determine the wording in our ordinance, which will be town-wide, not just for this particular neighborhood.

After the last meeting, Mr. Staradumsky investigated materials and heights of fencing both in subdivisions and highways. The two local subdivisions with perimeter fencing are St. James community in St. James, Brunswick County, and Landfall, which is in New Hanover County. Both communities have concrete or masonary block, which is eight feet in height. Along major highways, sound abatement walls and fences have been from eight to sixteen feet tall, but these are sound walls, particularly built for multiple lane highways.

Discussion ensued about the aesthetics of higher fencing, and several board members shared their opinions, ultimately, Chairman Scott Milligan, Vice Chairman Joe Boyd, Mr. Jonas Williams, and Mrs. Theresa Heath opined that eight-feet would look a lot better, and Mr. John Weaver agreed.

Chad Staradumsky shared the suggested text amendment for Article 3, definition of Subdivision perimeter fencing, which is not currently in our Ordinance. Chad also shared the suggested text for Article 6, which was shown in red in the Agenda packets.

The Board discussed having a Public Hearing at the next Planning Board meeting to be held, on Tuesday, April 1st at 6:00 p.m.

ACTION – Mr. Jonas Williams **MADE THE MOTION** to hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 1st at 6:00 p.m. for reviewing and reporting on the text amendments for Subdivision Fence for Major Subdivisions that we discussed tonight. Vice Chairman Joe Boyd **SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

It should be noted that some homeowners from Highland Shores arrived at 6:30 p.m., as the wrong time was listed on the Agenda that was sent to the Sunshine List. They were informed of the Public Hearing that will take place on April 1st.

ITEM #6 – NEW BUSINESS

a. FY25/26 Planning Work Plan and Unification of the Ordinances Discussion

Planner Chad Staradumsky revealed the 2025-2026 suggested Work Plan which laid out the 12 to 18 months process of reviewing and unification of the Ordinances. This would involve working with a consultant and develop a timeline to guide the Planning Board through combing through the ordinances for the betterment, like an audit, organizing them, and consolidation of separate ordinances. Chad relayed that he working on a proposal from the Council of Governments for the codification and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and is planning to spread the costs over a 2-year period. He expressed that the articles would be consolidated from fifteen to about eight. As our budget meeting is coming up in March, Chad is hoping to get another estimate. While he initially included the Land Use Plan, removing it would save about $13,000. Chad further explained that this would combine the zoning, Subdivision, Off-Street and Flood Ordinances, and update them. Vice Chairman Joe Boyd replied that even though it is tedious and painful going through everything, it helps to simplify things. The question is the money worth it? Scott Milligan inserted that the Board of Commissioners would have to make the financial decision, and opined that he was surprised it wasn't closer to $50,000, instead of $92,000, and it may be time to revisit codification.t

Planner Staradumsky asked if the Planning Board is willing to work 12 to 14 months on this? He explained the timeline would be incorporated into the meetings. Chairman Scott Milligan personally thinks the price is high. Mrs. Theresa Heath asked, "Should we have some large projects that come up, would we work around those?"

Vice Chairman Joe Boyd, personally sees a lot of good in the codification and UDO. He doesn't think the fee is that bad. Chairman Milligan opined it will be needed at some point. Discussion ensued.

Mr. John Weaver opined that is difficult for the Planning Board to make a decision if we don't know about the money situation. Chad Staradumsky explained, we need to know if the Planning Board is willing to work on the process. Mrs. Theresa Heath asked if this is in addition to our normal meetings.. Chad explained it would be incorporated into our normal meetings, and we would have a timeline. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Milligan surmised that if the Board of Commissioners is willing to approve it, is the Planning Board willing to do the work.

Mr. John Weaver said he has worked on this in several counties, and our Town is less than 3 miles, should be a lot cheaper. He asked Mr. Staradumsky how many small towns have completed the UDO, and how long does it take? Chad replied that Sunset Beach was about 1½ year, and Southport by the Council of Governments took about 12 to 18 months.

Mr. Staradumsky said it may be possible to stretch it out over three years for the payment, and we will get at least one more estimate. The board discussed the remaining items on the Work Plan.

Chairman Scott Milligan indicated he is willing to move forward with the Work Plan if the Board of Commissioners approves it.

Town Manager Athina Williams explained that we are looking for approval of the Work Plan. This item codification and Unified Development Ordinance was on our Work Plan previously, but we didn't get to it.

ACTION - Vice Chairman Joe Boyd **MADE THE MOTION** to recommend the approval of the **FY 25/26 Work Plan** as discussed. Mr. Jonas Williams **SECONDED THE MOTION.**

Commissioner Hunter Smith, who was in the audience, thanked everyone for being on the Planning Board and all you do for the citizens of the Town of Belville. He also stated that as a Commissioner, he wants to let you know that we always want to hear the truth, and we will support you however we can.

ACTION - Mrs. Theresa Heath **MADE THE MOTION** to adjourn. Mr. Jonas Williams **SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS.**

Minutes Compiled by Sharon A. Niemann

SIGNED:

Scott Milligan, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sharon A. Niemann, Town Clerk

TOWN OF BELVILLE CORPORATE SEAL NORTH CAROLINA