

**Town Council Minutes
Morehead City, North Carolina**

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

The Honorable Council of the Town of Morehead City held the Regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, in the Council Chambers at City Hall located at 1100 Bridges Street, Morehead City, North Carolina.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Gerald A. Jones, Jr.; Councilmembers George Ballou, David Horton, William Taylor, Harvey Walker, and Diane Warrender.

STAFF PRESENT: City Attorney Derek Taylor, Interim City Manager Chris Turner, Finance Director/Assistant City Manager Jewel Lasater, Public Services Director/Assistant City Manager Daniel Williams, Police Chief Bryan Dixon, Human Resources Director Susan Nixon, Communications Director Alize Proisy, Fire-EMS Chief Courtney Wade, and City Clerk Cathy Campbell,

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Ruch, Executive Director, and Katherine Metts, Assistant Director, of Downtown Morehead City Inc., George Everett, Gloria McCarther, Melissa and Missy Oden, and Jan Willis.

Mayor Jones called the Regular meeting of the Morehead City Town Council to order at 5:30 p.m. with a quorum present. Councilmember Ballou gave the invocation and Mayor Jones led the pledge of allegiance.

Councilmember Walker asked and then made a motion **to amend the agenda to add a closed session per 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, and to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against a public officer or employee.** Councilmember Ballou seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Jones asked if there were any questions concerning the Consent Agenda items. Hearing none, Councilmember Ballou made a motion **to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.** Councilmember Horton seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

Included within the Consent Agenda were the following approvals:

- A. Approve the minutes of the December 6, 2022 Special Town Council Meeting as presented.
- B. Approve the minutes of the December 13, 2022 Regular Town Council Meeting as

presented.

- C. Accept the Finance Director and Tax Collector Reports as presented.
- D. Accept the Notice of Ad Valorem Tax Overpayments in the amount of \$4,707.62 for the month of December 2022, as presented.
- E. Approve the Requests for Refunds of Overpayment of Ad Valorem Taxes in the amount of \$301.20 for December 2022, as presented.
- F. Accept Estimated Fund Balance Report as presented.
- G. Adopt Budget Ordinance Amendment 2023-01 as presented and recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee.
- H. Adopt Governmental Capital Project Budget Ordinance Amendment 2023-02 as presented and recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee.
- I. Accept the Quarterly Financial Report July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 as presented and recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee.
- J. Accept the Quarterly Financial Report July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 as presented and recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee.

All above noted ordinances are filed in Ordinance Book #9.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Approval of the Subrecipient Agreement Between the Town of Morehead City and NCORR

Interim City Manager Chris Turner appeared before the Town Council to present the Subrecipient Agreement between the Town of Morehead City and the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR) in support of the Elijah's Landing Community Development Block Grant project. The agreement outlines the parameters for managing the project and its funding. He reported that City Attorney Derek Taylor reviewed the agreement for legal sufficiency and found no points of concern.

Councilmember Warrender made a motion **to approve the Subrecipient Agreement between the Town of Morehead City and the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency in support of Elijah's Landing Community Development Block Grant project as presented.** Councilmember Walker seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

Consider Adoption of Governmental Capital Project Budget Ordinance Amendment 2023-03 In Support of Mitchell Village Park Repairs

Finance Director/Assistant City Manager Jewel Lasater presented Governmental Capital Project Budget Ordinance 2023-03, advising that this budget amendment allocates \$21,000 necessary to cover repairs to the Mitchell Village Park playground equipment so that the park may be reopened. The \$21,000 includes \$500 for contingencies. These funds are being reallocated from savings from other previously funded park projects.

In response to a question, Public Services Director/Assistant City Manager Daniel Williams shared that the repairs would address multiple safety concerns from deteriorating equipment.

Councilmember Horton made a motion **to adopt Budget Ordinance Amendment 2023-03 as presented.** Councilmember Taylor seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

Consider Potential Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Bylaw Amendments

Interim City Manager Chris Turner opened the discussion of a possible Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Bylaw Amendment based upon a request from Councilmember Horton during the December 12, 2022 Town Council meeting. Councilmember Horton was in favor of setting the date and time of the Advisory Board's meetings to ensure meetings are held in the evenings. Currently, the Advisory Board Bylaws allow the Advisory board members to set their own meeting schedule at their Annual Meeting. As part of the document review, staff recommended that the Committee's Annual Meeting be changed to January of each year so that members appointed in December may participate, as well as a number of clerical and source reference corrections.

Councilmember Ballou stated that the Planning Board Bylaws and the Board of Adjustment Rules of Procedures specify their meeting date and time, and it is desired that the same be done for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This would allow potential candidates to know in advance if they will be able to attend the meetings. He proposed that the meetings be set on the 4th Monday of each month, which is consistent with their current meeting day, but that they meet at 5:30 p.m. He felt it was an oversight that this was not incorporated in the original set of bylaws.

Councilmember Warrender opposed the proposal stating that it is unnecessary since the Advisory Board does not appear to be having issues with the current process. She also pointed out that changing to evening hours will require staff to work overtime.

At this time, Councilmember Ballou made a motion **to amend the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Bylaws to as set forth in the proposed amendment.** Councilmember Horton seconded the motion.

Councilmember Taylor stated that he understands the need for consistency; however, he explained that there are three (3) levels of committee/boards, which are defined by the requirement for legislative procedures such as public hearings. The Parks and Recreation

Advisory Board falls within the least restrictive category because although it is helpful to have their input from all board members, it is not necessary in every situation because their recommendations are not subject to public hearings or other formal legislative procedures. He further pointed out that many of the Board's members are active in sport league activities and evening meetings may conflict with these activities. For these reasons, Councilmember Taylor felt it was important to allow the Advisory Board to set their own meeting schedules.

Councilmember Walker stated that the meetings schedules should be set so that no citizen groups are prohibited from participating. .

Councilmember Horton stated that he was on the Committee that developed the bylaws and agreed it was an oversight in not having done this from the beginning. Because some citizens work out of town, it would be better to hold the meetings at night so everyone can participate.

Mayor Jones called for the vote. The motion carried by majority vote. (3-2; Taylor and Warrender were opposed).

CITY MANAGERS REPORT

In providing his monthly report to Council, Mr. Turner reported on the following:

- City Offices will be closed on Monday, January 16, 2023 in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service and Remembrance holiday.
- Kelli Jones has accepted the offer to serve as the city's Grant Manager and will begin her service within the next 30 days.
- Staff was commended for their response to the power outages that occurred during the Christmas and New Year's breaks.

In closing, Mr. Turner thanked Communications Director Alize Proisy for her unwavering service to the City. "She has been a true gift to the city, lifting it to a higher mark." He wished her great success in her career and future service. Mayor Jones concurred.

CITIZEN REQUESTS/COMMENTS (2 Minute Time Limit)

There were none.

COUNCIL REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Councilmember Warrender commended three ladies from the Blaire Farms neighborhood who have initiated an effort to keep their neighborhood clean.

Councilmember Taylor thanked those present for coming and said he hopes to see the crowd grow larger.

Councilmember Horton thanked Alize for her service and wished her best wishes for her future.

Councilmember Ballou also commended staff and especially Interim City Manager Chris Turner who came out during the power outages to assist staff in their response to this difficult situation.

Councilmember Walker thanked those present for coming out tonight, and thanked Mr. Turner and offered best wishes to Ms. Proisy.

APPROVE THE DECEMBER 13, 2022, CLOSED SESSION MINUTES AS PRESENTED

After a review of the minutes provided by City Clerk Cathy Campbell, Councilmember Taylor made a motion **approve the December 13, 2022, Closed Session minutes as presented.** Councilmember Horton seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

At this time, Councilmember Walker asked all department heads to remain for the closed session and excused Interim City Manager Chris Turner.

CLOSED SESSION

Councilmember Walker moved **to enter into Closed Session** at 6:11 p.m. per 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, and to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against a public officer or employee. Councilmember Ballou seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

Councilmember Horton moved **to return to Open Session** at 7:38 p.m. Councilmember Warrender seconded and the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, Mayor Jones adjourned the meeting 7:39 p.m.

Attest:

Cathy Campbell
Cathy Campbell, City Clerk

Gerald A. Jones, Jr.
Gerald A. Jones, Jr., Mayor

