



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
BOARD OF ALDERMEN – REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY BUILDING
223 E BAY STREET, SOUTHPORT NC 28461
NOVEMBER 13, 2025 | 6:00 PM**

Present Members:

Mayor Rich Alt, Mayor Pro-Tem Rebecca Kelley, Alderman Karen Mosteller, Alderman Robert Carroll, Alderman Lowe Davis, Alderman Frank Lai

Members Absent:

Alderman Marc Spencer

Staff Present:

City Manager Noah Saldo, City Clerk Tori Deviney, Public Information Officer ChyAnn Ketchum, Police Chief Todd Coring, Fire Chief Charles Drew, Battalion Chief Ralph Treadway, Public Works Director Tom Stanley, Parks and Recreation Director Heather Hemphill

Other Members:

City Attorney Brady Herman

A. Call to Order

Mayor Alt called the meeting to order at 6pm

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Alt led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance

C. Invocation

Reverend Mitzi Johnson from Trinity Methodist Church in Southport provided the invocation.

Mayor Alt read the required ethics statement and asked members to declare any conflicts of interest; none were stated.

D. Public Comment

There was no public comment

E. Approval of the Agenda

Before considering approval of the agenda, Mayor Alt requested an addition to include a closed session at the end of the meeting to discuss a legal matter. Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley moved to approve the agenda with the closed session added at the end, and Alderman Lai seconded.

Alderman Davis proposed an amendment to remove three items from under Item F of the agenda:

- Item 3: Public Comment Policy Amendment
- Item 5: Conflict of Interest Policy
- Item 6: City Alleyways

Alderman Davis expressed concern about addressing these items at the final regular meeting of the current Board, noting that the upcoming new Board should have the opportunity to evaluate policies that will primarily affect them.

Several members discussed whether the Conflict of Interest Policy warranted review that night. Mayor Alt emphasized that the policy was not new, it was adopted in 2022 and noted that an HR-related provision has been overlooked and should be brought to the Board's attention. Alderman Mosteller responded that she had insufficient background material to discuss it fully and reiterated that such policy review should be handled by the incoming Board.

Regarding alleyways, Alderman Mosteller noted that staff had already been directed during a prior special meeting on October 28 to research and notify the Board as needed, and there was no new information requiring discussion.

A vote was taken on the motion to approve the agenda with the added closed session at the end. The motion failed 2-3

Yay - Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley

Yay - Alderman Lai

Nay - Alderman Davis

Nay - Alderman Carroll

Nay - Alderman Mosteller

Alderman Davis then introduced a new motion to approve the agenda with Items 3, 5, and 6 removed, and to add a closed session at the end of the meeting for attorney-client discussion of a legal matter. The motion was seconded by Alderman Mosteller.

Discussion reopened briefly regarding whether to adopt the minor amendment to the public comment policy concerning scenting and noise-making devices. Some members expressed that the issue could be expanded or reconsidered by the new Board.

The motion passed 4-1

Yay - Alderman Lai

Yay - Alderman Davis

Yay - Alderman Carroll

Yay - Alderman Mosteller

Nay - Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley

F. AGENDA

1. Community Update – Chief Coring

Police Chief Coring delivered a community briefing on the September 27 mass shooting at American Fish Company. He provided a minute-by-minute overview of the initial response, describing the rapid escalation of 911 calls, the arrival of Southport officers, and coordination with multiple local, state, and federal agencies. Chief Coring highlighted lifesaving actions by officers, the critical work of 911 telecommunicators, and the extensive multi-agency partnership involving more than 80 law enforcement personnel and 30+ fire/EMS responders.

He also recognized community support, the work of area chaplains, ongoing officer wellness efforts, and the continued investigation in cooperation with SBI, FBI, ATF, and Brunswick County. Chief Coring expressed pride in his officers and gratitude for the community's resilience and support, emphasizing efforts to restore a sense of safety citywide.

2. Cancellation of the December 1st Regular Aldermen Meeting

Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley made a motion to cancel the Aldermen's regular December 1st meeting. Alderman Mosteller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

3. Concerns related to Developer's Tree Burning

Mayor Alt spoke on concerns related to tree-burning activity by the developers of Indigo Phase II. He explained that a roadway had been cleared on the property and that, based on his observation, the developers appeared to be honoring their commitment not to clear individual lots. A retention pond area had also been cleared at the end of the new road.

Mayor Alt reported that the developers initially chose to burn the fallen trees, which created heavy smoke affecting nearby areas, including Southport Elementary School. On the first day, smoke was thick enough that concerns were raised about allowing children onto the playground area. Mayor Alt contacted Chad Paul, who attempted to halt the burning. However, burning continued into the second day, prompting another call. Mr. Paul later assured the Mayor that burning would cease at least through December, though it was unclear what would occur afterward. For now, debris is being hauled away rather than burned.

Mayor Alt stated that Chief Drew had advised him that oversight of such burning activities falls under the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in Wilmington. Mayor Alt informed the

Board and public that if burning resumes and creates health or air-quality issues, both citizens and the City may contact DEQ directly to request intervention.

Alderman Lai added that he had also spoken with the developers in his role as POA president and received assurances that burning would not continue. He and other members noted that they had received numerous complaints from residents.

Alderman Davis observed that a more permanent solution may require Brunswick County to adopt a no-burn debris ordinance. She suggested that the Board formally request the County to consider such a measure. Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley noted that similar complaints are frequently raised during County public comment periods, but county leaders have not shown interest in pursuing restrictions so far.

Mayor Alt concluded that the most effective immediate recourse remains contacting DEQ and recommended that both residents and the City utilize that option if issues arise in the future.

G. Committee Reports

ABC Board – Alderman Lai

Alderman Lai reported that the ABC Board met on Tuesday and noted another strong month of sales. Mixed beverage sales were slightly down, which he attributed to the recent mass shooting incident at American Fish Company, but overall, the store continues to perform very well.

Beautification Committee – Alderman Mosteller

Alderman Mosteller provided an update on recent Beautification Committee projects. Volunteers completed painting and staining work at Waterfront Park and the City Pier, constructed six new benches for the Community Building using repurposed lumber, and partnered with Parks & Recreation staff to enhance landscaping at Franklin Square Park. Preparations for Christmas decor have also begun, including work on the Whittler's Bench Holiday Tree and refreshing wreath materials.

The committee will next meet on Monday, November 17 at 5:00 p.m. Due to Winterfest events, there will be no Saturday cleanup in December.

Alderman Mosteller also recognized the Forestry Committee, which is accepting nominations for the annual Tree Champion Award. The committee is also preparing for its next annual tree planting project. Their next meeting will be Wednesday, November 19 at 5:00 p.m.

Alderman Davis asked for clarification regarding a tree decorating contest, specifically who was organizing it and where the trees would be displayed.

Garden Club member, Sue Hodgins, explained the new Winterfest tree decorating event at Franklin Square Park. Participants provide and decorate their own trees, and the Garden Club will assist with layout and planning. Up to 60 trees can be accommodated. A People's Choice

Award will be given, including a local restaurant gift certificate. Registration is \$30 and open through November 24.

H. Manager's Report – City Manager Noah Saldo

City Manager Saldo shared that HDR Architects were in town this week to begin work on the Old City Hall/Courthouse renovation project, with several kickoff meetings held.

He also reported progress on the long-awaited weather tower, which is now under fabrication. Installation is expected around the beginning of the year.

He closed by wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

I. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Alt expressed heartfelt gratitude to Chief Coring, Chief Drew, and all emergency personnel for their extraordinary efforts during the recent mass-casualty event. He had no additional comments.

J. Staff Reports

Staff reports were included in the agenda packet for Board review.

K. Board Comments

Alderman Mosteller shared that Representative Miller delivered Southport's mental health resolution to a newly formed state committee addressing mental health, involuntary commitment, and public safety. She expressed appreciation for his continued advocacy.

Alderman Davis thanked Reverend Mitzi Johnson for her meaningful invocation.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley announced that Brunswick County has launched an online tool for tracking development activity, allowing residents to view approved projects and buildout statuses along major corridors such as NC 211.

Alderman Lai thanked Chief Drew and Chief Coring for their response during the recent emergency event. He reflected on prior Board discussions about EMS funding and emphasized that the incident demonstrated the importance of rapid emergency response times.

L. Closed Session

Mayor Alt requested a motion to enter closed session for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel.

Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley; seconded by Alderman Lai.

The motion passed unanimously, and the Board entered closed session at 7:12 pm.

Mayor Alt requested a motion to come out of closed session for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel.

Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley; seconded by Alderman Lai.

The motion passed unanimously, and the Board reconvened open session at 7:22 pm.

M. Adjourn

Mayor Alt requested a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro-Tem Kelley made the motion, and it was seconded by Alderman Mosteller. Motion passed unanimously. Adjourned at 7:22 pm.

R. B. Alt

Rich Alt, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tori Deviney

Tori Deviney, City Clerk

