



March 13, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
223 E. BAY STREET
6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Richard Alt
Mayor Pro-Tem Rebecca Kelley
Aldermen Marc Spencer, Robert Carroll, Frank Lai, Lowe Davis, Karen Mosteller

STAFF: Noah Saldo, Interim City Manager
Tori Deviney, Deputy City Clerk
Todd Coring, Police Chief
Charles Drew, Fire Chief
Maureen Meehan, Planning Services Director
Tom Stanley, Public Services Director
ChyAnn Ketchum, Public Information Officer
Brady Herman, City Attorney

A. Call to Order

Mayor Alt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Invocation

Pastor Carrie Evans, Southport Presbyterian Church, gave the invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Alt led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Public Comment

Alderman Lai made a motion to open public comment, second by Alderman Kelley.
Unanimous vote; motion carried.

Mayor Alt advised public comment participants to provide contact information to the

Clerk if requesting a response to their comments.

Mayor Alt asked the public to hold comments regarding the 441 acres, or the land out by MOTSU, until after a presentation by the Manager which should answer a lot of public questions.

Ms. Lynn Williams, 202 W. Moore Street addressed the Board regarding a complaint she recently learned had been made about a fence, a swing, and a landscaped garden situation on or near a city owned lot adjacent to her property. She said she had not been approached directly and was unaware the issue had come up until informed by someone who had attended a public meeting. Ms. Williams explained that the fence had been installed by a contractor with the proper permits, noting that the area in question had become a public cut-through where people gathered and littered. She said the swing had been in place for decades, and the garden area had existed before she moved into the home. She added that the stones bordering the garden were added to help maintain it and discourage damage. "My husband and I pick up trash and keep it clean. We never intended to encroach on city land. We just wanted to maintain it and make it nice." She concluded by requesting clarity on the city's concerns and offered to work with the City if any adjustments needed to be made.

Mr. Angelo Collins, 1107 N. Caswell Avenue publicly thanked city staff, particularly the code enforcement officer known as "HP." Mr. Collins recounted a recent event where HP was confronted by a hostile and aggressive resident while performing his duties. Mr. Collins emphasized HP's professionalism, stating, "He stood calm, firm, and respectful the whole time. He could have easily lost his cool, but he didn't. We should never tolerate threats or disrespect toward people doing their job," he said, commending the city's leadership and service overall.

Alderman Carroll moved to close Public Comment, second by Alderman Kelley.
Unanimous vote; motion carried.

E. Mayor and Aldermen Response to Public Comment

No comments stated.

Mayor Alt read the Ethics Statement:

"If any members know of any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest concerning matters on the agenda, please so state at this time."

No conflicts of interest stated.

F. Approval of Agenda

Alderman Lai made a motion to approve the Agenda, second by Alderman Mosteller.
Unanimous vote; motion carried.

G. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Paving Contract and Budget Amendment (Agenda pages 3-14)

Alderman Kelley spoke about the paving contract, specifically page 2 regarding work performed in a timely and efficient manner. “Who decides that,” she asked. City Manager Saldo responded that Public Works Director, Tom Stanley would decide that and his report stated a completion date of June 30th. Alderman Kelley suggested adding the June 30th date to the contract.

2. BRIC Grant Budget Amendment (Agenda Pages 15-18)

Mayor Alt requested the display of the paving exhibit. He talked about the recent sidewalk replacements and upcoming street paving project. He emphasized the Bonnet’s Creek Phase I Storm Water System Improvement Project and the reasoning for beginning the project with the section that runs under Doshier Memorial Hospital instead of starting at the river and working backwards. He spoke about the BRIC grant and the Consent Agenda item for \$600,000 for a new engineering study. City Manager Saldo reported that the \$600,000 will be reimbursable. He noted that there is also the probability to increase the scope of work as additional state and federal funding is available.

3. Set a Public Hearing for April 10, 2025, Aldermen meeting for Special Event UDO Text Amendment (Agenda pages 19-22)

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Alderman Kelley made a motion to put Item G.1 into the regular Agenda as Item H.2 and to approve the Consent Agenda. Alderman Mosteller seconded the motion.

Unanimous vote; motion carried.

H. Agenda

1. Waters at Southport Final Plat (Agenda pages 23-139)

Planning Services Director Maureen Meehan presented a request for final plat approval of two (2) lots located on Stuart Avenue within the “Waters at Southport Subdivision.” She explained that while infrastructure work was not yet complete for the other 40 lots in the development, these two lots were ready and met all requirements. She said the rest of the plat would be submitted in a future phase.

Alderman Mosteller made a motion to approve the final plat for Lots 41 & 42 based on conformance with the previously approved preliminary plat and with the applicable standards of the City of Southport and the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Seconded by Alderman Kelley. **Unanimous vote, motion carried.**

2. Paving Contract and Budget Amendment (Agenda pages 3-14)

Noting that past contracts had been written without deadlines in them, Alderman Kelley referenced language in the contract; “*the City reserves the right to terminate this contract upon 10 days written notice to the contractor solely at the election of the City.*” She indicated she would like to have a time line in the contract to make the above statement enforceable. She pointed out that Public Works Director Stanley had given June 30th in his report and she

requested adding the June 30th date to the contract instead of leaving the contract open ended.

Alderman Mosteller asked the City Attorney; “If we did a hard date, would there also have to be more accompanying language?” Attorney Brady responded the language is clear and adding a section about the deadline would suffice. Alderman Lai questioned if consequences should be added for failure to comply. City Manager Saldo pointed out that the only penalty would be not to release the money. Attorney Brady concurred and indicated the Board could approve the contract with the deadline date included and it would be up to the contractor whether or not they accept it. He added that if they balk at the addition.

Alderman Kelley made a motion to add the June 30th date to the contract in a way that Attorney Brady sees fit to make it work and approve the Budget Amendment. Alderman Mosteller seconded the motion.

Unanimous vote; motion carried.

2. Public Hearing Text Amendment to Section 3.14.C. Minimum Parking Requirements and Section 3.17.D Landscaping on Public Property of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) (Agenda pages 140-145)

Alderman Mosteller made a motion to go into Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman _ Lai. **Unanimous motion; motion carried.**

Director Meehan gave a brief presentation of the proposed language. The request is for a text amendment to the off-street parking and landscaping sections of the UDO and it is in response to the updates to Section 16 of the City Code or Ordinances, Obstruction of Public Rights of Way made December, 2024. The UDO language mirrors the language of the code. The updates clarify parking standards, outlines the surface materials and the size of the parking spaces that are allowed and it allows the existing parking at the time of adoption of the city ordinance to remain as long as they are not hazardous or a safety issue. It also outlines how vegetation and protective measures can be placed around trees by adjoining property owners, what vegetation allowances are allowed within the public right of way, the private installation of native trees, if a city tree needs to be removed for any reason, for construction purposes, or if it is diseased or dying. Director Meehan stated that the Planning Board reviewed the proposed text amendment and recommended approval.

Director Meehan reported that there is currently an active right-of-way permit. She added that if anyone wanted to use this portion of the UDO, they would have to come in and apply for a free right-of-way permit to install any vegetation.

There was no public comment.

Section 3.17.D Landscaping on Public Property

1. It shall be unlawful for any person to place or cause to be placed on any public street, road, alley, sidewalk or other public right-of-way within the city any wall, fence, gate, brick, stone, wood, rock, vegetation or other structure, material, or substance above the horizontal plan of the existing ground. The installation of turf grasses on grade is allowed within the

right-of-way. In addition it shall be unlawful for any person to take any action whatsoever within any public rights-of-way which creates a hazardous condition or safety hazard or which otherwise interferes with or obstructs in any manner the passage of persons or vehicles upon or within said public rights-of-way or which obstructs, interferes with or hinders lawful parking within any public right-of-way.

2. Vegetation or other protective measures consistent with current arboricultural best management practices (ANSI A300 standards) and the guidelines outlined in the most recent City of Southport Urban Forest Management Plan shall be permitted to be placed within a ten (10) foot radius of the base of a City tree by an adjoining property owner or by the City, for the purpose of limiting damage to the tree by nearby parked vehicles. Such action shall require review and written approval by the UDO Administrator, the Public Services Director, and the Fire Marshal.
3. Private installation of native trees within the right-of-way is permitted when city trees must be removed for construction or when a tree must be removed due to the health of the tree. Canopy and understory installation shall follow standards found in the UDO, current arboricultural best management practices (ANSI A300 standards), and the guidelines outlined in the most recent City of Southport Urban Forest Management Plan. Such action shall require review and written approval by the UDO Administrator in consultation with the Forestry Committee.

Alderman Carroll made a motion to come out of Public Hearing. Seconded by Alderman Kelley. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

3. North Howe Street Overlay District (Agenda pages 146-152)

Director Meehan provided a status report on the North Howe Street Overlay District and asked for the Board to discuss the issues and provide direction for staff. She reported:

- City staff had met in November, 2024 with Wes MacLeod of the Cape Fear Council of Government and County planning staff to present an overlay request
- The request was a text and map amendment for the overlay. County staff was in favor of meeting with city staff and discussing options for the area of North Howe Street that is both city and county properties after the loss of the City's Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)
- A follow-up meeting was held in January. At that meeting, the County responded to the request and their willingness for an individual text amendment was changed to wanting to only include it in the current update of their UDO.
- County staff advised that since the filing of SB 382, the County Planning Board was not accepting separate text amendments.

Director Meehan explained the corridor boundary encompasses North Howe Street from Stuart Avenue, 12th Street between Lord and North Atlantic Avenues, and to the intersection of Robert Ruark and River Road. The area has smaller lot sizes, less intensive uses and more compatible to the business district zoning than highway commercial so it was decided to focus on that area. Most of it is existing homes that have been converted into non residential uses and there is one two story in-fill development.

Director Meehan referred to a side by side slide comparison of the existing City of Southport and the existing Brunswick County zoning. She highlighted the city properties shown in red (highway commercial) and pink (business district) along with a sliver of multi-family and a purple square (planned unit development, PUD). She pointed out the majority of the County zoning is neighborhood commercial with areas of low density commercial. She explained that the low density commercial was added instead of all neighborhood commercial was to ensure that the rezoning that took place in July did not bring any of the uses into non-conformity.

Director Meehan outlined the proposed language, as provided in the agenda packet.

Purpose and Intent

- Preserve the unique characteristics of the corridor and protect and enhance the historic character of the City of Southport

Applicability

- To all new construction within the district
- Includes expansion or modification of existing commercial uses when floor area is increased by at least 50% or 5,000 sq. ft., whichever is greater
- Exempt from the requirements - communication towers, religious institutions, government buildings, and public structures

Dimensional Standards

- Maximum height limit shall not exceed 50 feet
- No front or side yards required. Where a side yard is provided (not required), the same shall be not less than four (4) feet.
- Minimum rear setback shall be 10 feet throughout the Southport overlay district

Permitted Uses

1. All uses shall be permitted in accordance with the requirements of the underlying zoning district with the exception of residential uses

2. Residential Uses

Residential uses shall only be permitted as part of a commercial or office project where fronting on Howe Street

Dwellings may be located on the ground level or as standalone structures if situated entirely behind the principal structure, with the principal structure serving as the primary street frontage. Dwellings may be permitted as standalone structures when not fronting on Howe Street.

Parking Requirements

- For nonresidential uses, where on-street or public parking facilities are located within 500 linear feet of a proposed use, measured as a straight-line distance from the entrance of the building, the minimum off-street parking requirements may be reduced by 50%

Sidewalk Requirements and Pedestrian Facilities

- Sidewalks shall be required for all new multi-family developments and new construction nonresidential development of a principal use. Redevelopment or change of use of existing nonresidential or multi-family structures does not require the installation of sidewalks
- Sidewalks shall be installed within the right-of-way and connect to adjacent facilities where applicable. Where right-of-way widths adjacent to the edge of pavement are in excess of 10 feet, sidewalks shall be separated by a minimum three (3) foot landscaped strip adjacent to the edge of pavement
- In all cases, sidewalks shall extend to the property line

- Sidewalks shall be at least five (5) feet wide and constructed of concrete at least five (5) inches thick. Sidewalks shall consist of a minimum of six (6) inches of concrete at driveway crossings or shall be adequately reinforced otherwise. All sidewalks must meet ADA requirements including where necessary to serve required cluster mailbox locations within subdivisions or multi-family development
- Sidewalks built adjacent to an NCDOT road facility shall be built to meet NCDOT sidewalk standards
- Pedestrian walkways shall form an on-site circulation system that minimize conflict between pedestrians and traffic at all points of pedestrian access to on-site parking and building entrances. Pedestrian walkways shall connect building entrances to one another and from building entrances to public sidewalk connections. Pedestrian walkways shall be provided to any pedestrian access point or any parking space that is more than 50 feet from the building entrance or principal on-site destination. All developments containing more than one (1) building shall provide walkways between the principal entrances of the buildings.

Design Standards

- The primary entrance of the structure shall be functionally designed on the front facade facing the primary street
- Except for corner lots, the front facade of the principal structure shall be parallel to the front lot line and street
- No portion of a building facing a front or side lot line, unless a zero lot line common wall, shall be constructed of unadorned (unfaced) concrete masonry units or corrugated and/or sheet metal.
- No single facade extending unbroken more than 35 feet in a horizontal plane may be visible from a public roadway

Signage

- Outdoor advertising structures shall be prohibited
- No freestanding sign shall exceed a height of 10 feet. All other sign requirements and sizing shall be in accordance with Section 8.2

Responding to a query by Alderman Mosteller, Director Meehan spoke about the proposed deletion of the following language and when a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) would be required:

~~A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) conducted in accord with Section 6.16 shall be required for all projects, which can be anticipated to generate at least 500 vehicle trips per day based on the latest edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual.~~

Alderman Kelley expressed her concerns; “The 5,000 sq. ft. is a huge deal for us. I think that has prevented some of the, not big box retailers, but they are big for Southport retailers from coming in on our entry corridor up to this point. I don’t know if there is a different number because 10,000 is certainly a lot. If you go back to 7,500, 6,000 and to try and work with the County and find some middle ground because if we are looking at a 10,000 sq. ft. building, that changes the look and feel coming into town.”

Alderman Mosteller suggested going directly to the Brunswick County Planning Board; “I think it is incumbent on us to have these conversations because there is more than just this, the 50 feet, we need to understand that the dry storage units at the marina at the end of W. West Street are 50 feet, that’s what 50 feet looks like, not Southport.” Mayor Alt agreed and he spoke

about possible compromises, i.e., the 50 feet height only permitted north of 14th Street; 14th Street down to the water 5,000 sq. ft. because it keeps the charm and ambiance of the town and north of 14th Street could be 10,000 sq. ft. Alderman Mosteller stressed asking the County for “what we want because it is consistent with our zoning and let them hear us and see where we can go.” Recalling actions taken by Commissioner Pat Sykes to strip Southport’s ETJ, Alderman Carroll he stated his belief; “It is incumbent that this Board talk to County Commissioners and find out where they are on this draft.” Alderman Davis stated her surprise at some of the County’s proposed UDO changes that the Commissioners have voted down. At Alderman Davis’ request, Director Meehan indicated the County Planning Board meets on the second Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. or 6:00 depending on their agenda. Alderman Kelley pointed out the County has limitations on public comments. The possibility of a joint workshop was discussed. Alderman Carroll suggested; “We have a good draft, have given direction to staff, let them and our planning board go to the county staff and county planning board and come up with a final draft that our board presents to our county commissioners and work towards a resolution.” Alderman Mosteller concurred. Director Meehan indicated she would reach out to County staff.

Alderman Mosteller made a motion directing Director Meehan to be the point person on how, when, and if and she meet with the City Planning Board to have this discussion and come up with what their conversation is. Motion seconded by Alderman Carroll.

Discussion

Alderman Lai said; “I think we need to have our voice heard. Right now it looks like the County’s kind of cramming everything down our throat. We need people to know what our position is.” Alderman Kelley stated; “I think we have been very clear with the County what our position is, it’s not a mystery to anyone. We’ve gone to the County Commissioners, we’ve gone to the Planning Board, we’ve gone to all of these avenues at this point. I think when staff has the ability to go back and negotiate with our guidance and say go forth and find some sort of middle ground to come back to us with, at that point we can go back to the Planning Board and to the Commissioners because until that point we are just chasing our tails.” She pointed out that she has gone to those meetings, heard City staff stand up at those meetings over and over again, she has personally spoken to County Commissioners, and has personally spoken to the County Planning Board.

Director Meehan emphasized that the Brunswick County Planning Board is in the midst of updating their Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and does not want to entertain any separate individual requests. She added that the County is crafting language for inclusion of the Howe Street Overlay District in their UDO update. Alderman Mosteller expressed her frustration that the County Planning Board does not fully understand Southport’s zoning and conversations have been between staff and not engaged on the subcommittee level, “We need to make sure we’ve made our case the best we can. We could go a long way to have our planning board be able to make the case.” she said. Mayor Alt expressed reservations; “We now have all these different groups coming together. What is it that this board would like to see as a compromise and give staff direction to try to get that done. This board will be responsible for this, this board will own it.” Alderman Carroll stated his opinion the Board is not prepared to

move forward with any recommendations. Mayor Alt agreed and suggested a separate meeting with the Howe Street Overlay District as the only topic on the table. Noting that he was advised the County Board of Commissioners do not meet as a group, with a quorum, with other groups, Alderman Spencer discussed sending two Alderman to meet with the County Commissioner Chair and Southport's representative commissioner, Pat Sykes. Alderman Carroll agreed.

Alderman Mosteller withdrew her motion.

Board consensus, a special meeting will be held within the next seven days to work out what the guidance to staff will be.

4. HB337 & HB3398 (Alderman Mosteller) (Agenda pages 153-156)

Alderman Mosteller presented an overview of HB 337 filed March 6, 2025 that includes **An Act Removing Certain Described Property From The Corporate Limits Of The City of Southport**; 1408 N. Howe Street, 1222 N. Howe Street and 1221 N. Atlantic Avenue. She explained that the properties on North Howe Street and North Atlantic Avenue had been voluntarily annexed between 2000 and 2013. She expressed deep concern, stating,

“This is an avalanche hanging over our heads. If House Bill 337 is passed, who next will want to de-annex?” She urged the Board and residents to implore state representatives to protect Southport's future by not supporting House Bill 337 and not allowing future de annexations. Alderman Davis said; “ If these de annexations are allowed, then other property owners can just chew away at the city limits of the city of Southport.” She pointed out that a property currently for sale on N. Howe street is next to one of the properties that want to de-annex Alderman Carroll questioned why Southport's State and County representatives are repeatedly elected if they don't have the best interest of Southport in mind. He noted that other properties, some in the downtown area, have “threatened” to de-annex. Alderman Lai stated; “We have some people that apparently want to have Southport as part of their name, but not want to really be a part of Southport, they don't want to contribute to our infrastructure, etc., they just want to have the name in front of their place and that's not right.”

5. Sunny Point Property

City Manager Saldo provided an update on the Wildlife Resources Commission's acquisition of the 427 acre MOTSU property. He stated that the Council of State had approved the deal, the survey was complete, and the Attorney General's office was finalizing the title review. He expressed confidence that the acquisition would close before the contract expiration deadline.

Alderman Mosteller made a motion to extend the expiration date for the City's option agreement number 19000002 to a new expiration date, July 31, 2025, with closing to occur on or before September 5, 2025. Alderman Lai seconded the motion.

Alderman Spencer made a motion to open public comment, second by Alderman Kelley.
Unanimous vote; motion carried.

Several residents spoke in support of the city's efforts to preserve the MOTSU property. Mr. George Figoli expressed support but requested clarity on the purpose of the 10-acre portion the City would retain. City Manager Saldo explained that the land would be used as a lay down yard for city equipment and storm debris. He added that Brunswick County would retain four (4) acres of the property and may erect a water tower to support fire protection and water pressure. Alderman Carroll pointed out that the City's 10 acres are located on Sunny Point Road and the County's smaller portion is on Bethel Road.

Mr. Ron Madden expressed support; "I am so happy to hear you've made the right decision and that the conservation group will get the property. That was the right thing to do." He asked for the City to be good neighbors.

Mr. Ron Jones also spoke, praising the City for its leadership and urging it to consider screening or buffering any infrastructure built on the retained parcel.

Ms. Linda Jones spoke of her neighborhood at the end of Bethel Road and thanked the Aldermen for listening to the residents of Bethel Road and for selling the property to the Wildlife Commission.

Board members clarified for Ms. Deborah Seavuzzo that the four (4) acres across Bethel Road from her residence would become County property and any concerns she has on the use of the property should be directed to the County Commissioners that meet the first and third Mondays of the month.

Mr. Terry Duff, 6519 Walden Pond Lane, shared his outreach experience to multiple state agencies to garner an understanding of how funding flowed. Speaking on behalf of multiple Bethel Road residents, Mr. Duff asked the Board to vote to allow the extension of the option agreement with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC).

Alderman Spencer made a motion to close public comment. Alderman Kelley seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

Alderman Mosteller repeated her motion; "To extend the expiration date of the City's option agreement number 19000002 to a new expiration date, July 31, 2025, with closing to occur on or before September 5, 2025. Alderman Lai seconded the motion.

Discussion

Alderman Kelley assured the public that the Board never intended to develop the property or build a sewer plant. She emphasized that the Board was doing their best fiduciary responsibility for the citizens of Southport.

Alderman Spencer pointed out that the City never tried to sell the property for top dollar; "We went straight to one organization and we never looked at any other options. We got pushed around by our local neighbors who didn't like what they thought we were going to do. So we didn't do anything at all. Now we're selling 441 acres for \$600,000. Really, it's ridiculous! I

will sell my house today and buy it. So this was a bad deal from the beginning and a bunch of people from Bethel Road who don't vote, who have never paid Southport taxes, you're not a member of Southport. You talk of paradise. I grew up here, you ruined paradise for me. Paradise was when you could have multiple generations grow up and afford to buy a home and have a job. My dad worked at Sunny Point, it's on one side of you. On the other side of you is a nuclear power plant, did you know that.?"

Mayor Alt called for decorum. He noted that a legislator is allowed a lot of leeway but there is not going to be a screaming match. He pointed out that the property was originally purchased by the City for \$2M, has now sold to NCWRC for \$600,000 and hunting will be permitted on the property. Mayor Alt stated; "So, at a previous meeting we were looking at another organization that would not allow hunting but their parameters would not fit this agreement. Everything that we have been trying to do is for the betterment of the environment and the City and as much as we can help other people."

VOTE (by a show of hands)

Ayes: Aldermen Mosteller, Carroll, Davis, Lai, Kelley

Nay: Alderman Spencer

Motion carried 5 - 1

Alderman Kelley spoke to the audience; "You just sat through our whole meeting and we appreciate that you heard about the fight that we are beginning for the overlay that we're trying to do coming into Southport. We need your voices at the County meetings because as you say, you love Southport, that you care about whether or not we have a big box store coming into Southport. The County Commissioners meetings are the first and third Mondays and the County Planning Board meetings are on the second Monday of the month. Please go to the meetings and speak in public comment like you do here."

RECESS: 8:17 p.m.

RETURN TO SESSION: 8:26 p.m.

I. Committee Reports

1. ABC Board (Agenda pages 157-158)

Alderman Lai reported that the revenues for February 2025 compared to February 2024 are down 9%, due to one less day in February 2025(28) than February 2024(29).

J. Manager's Report

City Manager Saldo reported that he toured the City electric system with Energy Manager Larry Ditton, learning about the services the city provides and the current underground project being pursued that will help the city with power outages. Manager Saldo stated he is continuing work on the Shoreline Stabilization project. Surveyors were on site last week to begin the first phase of the project and staff is working with property owners in the area to get

easements for the next phase of the project. He reported the first budget meeting was held, he continues working with staff on the budget process, the next scheduled budget meeting workshop will be held Monday, March 24, 9:00 a.m. in the Indian Trail Meeting Hall where a review will begin of each department's budget, and additional budget meetings will be scheduled for the next few months.

K. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Alt reported that he attended the South Brunswick Sophomore Girls baseball game to a packed crowd. He pointed out that the team was the State Champions last year. He encouraged everyone to go watch a game and cheer them on.

Mayor Alt thanked the Board for their passion, discussions of the issues, and moving major projects forward.

L. Staff Reports

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| 1. | Permits and Inspections | (Agenda page 159) |
| 2. | Public Works | (Agenda pages 160-170) |
| 3. | Tax Collection | (Agenda pages 171-176) |
| 4. | Development Services | (Agenda pages 177-178) |
| 5. | Code Enforcement | (Agenda pages 179-182) |

M. Board Comments

Alderman Lai thanked the staff for all they have been doing. He thanked the City Manager for his zest and zeal coming into the manager's position; "I've seen more reports, he's burning up my email, I appreciate it."

Alderman Spencer stated praise and appreciation for Code Enforcement Officer, HP, for his handling of a situation on Cape Fear Drive involving a dog in the road. The dog belonged to Alderman Spencer's mother.

Alderman Spencer reported he met with Mr. Nelson Adams about a four (4) to five (5) block section of Caswell Avenue that allows for excessive speed. Alderman Spencer suggested looking at that section from 9th Street to 11th Street for installation of a stop sign. City Manager Saldo indicated that Public Services Director Stanley and Police Chief Coring are working on a solution.

Responding to a query by Alderman Spencer, City Manager Saldo reported that Director Stanley is working on a solution for water access in the Northwood Cemetery. Alderman Spencer asked about the cost involved. Director Stanley addressed the board and provided the following:

- \$9,600 estimated for one tap
- Backflow preventer required
- There are issues with new lead and copper rules
- Every pipe in cemetery is galvanized pipe
- EPA will eventually require pipe replacement

Director Stanley recommended installing a one inch tap on Mitchell Street and a one inch tap on Fodale Avenue, a spigot, and choose not to run a water line through the cemetery. He noted that people would have to carry watering buckets. He added that there are other options he would discuss with the city manager and he stated; “It’s not an easy solution and it’s not cheap.”

Alderman Kelley spoke about the section of Caswell Avenue that Alderman Spencer talked about. She reported there has been drag racing and 4-wheelers racing on that section of street. She added that she has seen a Southport Police Officer parked on Caswell Avenue. She said when the activity is reported, it is dealt with quickly. She stated her opinion that installing a stop sign may not deter the activity.

Alderman Kelley stated her pride for her son who performed in *The Beauty and The Beast* play at the Wilmington Level 5 Theater.

Alderman Davis reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee will meet Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 6:00 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation building next to the City Gym.

Alderman Davis pointed out that March is Women’s History Month and as a reminder she said; “In 1964 an employer could refuse to hire someone just because she was a woman. Until 1972 it was legal for a bank to refuse to let a married woman get her own account. If a single woman wanted to open an account, she had to have her father, brother, or some other reputable man co-sign with her and attest that she was of good moral character. Until 1974 it was legal to refuse to sell a woman a house. Until 1988, it was legal for landlords to refuse to rent a unit to a woman with children.”

Alderman Davis continued; “I get asked every year by some man who wants to know why women have their own month and why don’t men have their own month. There is a saying, *Your granny didn’t stay married because her generation had a stronger moral compass than people today. She stayed married because society literally took away all of her independence.*” So we who have made great advances at this point in our lives, we stand on the shoulders of the women who overcame all of that. And this is not stuff the men had to overcome. Yay for Women’s History Month!”

Alderman Carroll recalled an encounter with Mr. Nelson Adams where Mr. Adams drove him around showing him bumps in the streets where cuts had been made. Alderman Carroll stated he could commiserate with Alderman Spencer’s encounter with Mr. Adams.

Alderman Carroll stated; “To the Mayor’s point, we are passionate. We are here because we believe in Southport. We believe in the people we serve. We believe in city staff.

We're not scripted, it's from the heart, from raw emotion. We didn't have two or three hours, or two or three days to sit here and prepare remarks for public comment. We don't get that privilege but sometimes it's necessary to do that. We are a mixed bag right here, and it's pretty awesome to see how we are accomplishing stuff, how we can have a 6-0 vote and a good mayor who's more than willing and happy to break a tie doesn't have to sometimes. I'm proud to be here."

Alderman Mosteller had no comments.

N. Closed Session NCGS 143-318.11..

1. Motion to go into Closed Session Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (I) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease;

Alderman Spencer made a motion to go into Closed Session. Alderman Lai seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

Closed Session: 8:45 - 9:07 p.m.

Alderman Spencer made a motion to come out of Closed Session. Alderman Lai seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

Mayor Alt indicated there is a potential that the NC Department of Transportation will work with the City to look at the median on NC 211 and for the City to be able to participate in what that may look like.

O. Adjourn

Alderman Kelley made a motion to adjourn. Alderman Mosteller seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**


Richard Alt, Mayor

ATTEST:


Tori Deviney, Deputy Clerk

