

**NAVASSA REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

January 18, 2024

7:30 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Eulis Willis, Mayor  
William Ballard, Councilman  
Ernest Mooring, Councilman

Jerry Merrick, Councilman  
Ida Dixon, Councilwoman  
LaTonyia Lowe, Councilwoman

**STAFF PRESENT**

Michelyn Alston, Clerk  
Dale Thomas, Police Chief  
Claudia Bray, Financial/Project Consultant

Landin Holland, Planner  
Norwood Blanchard, Attorney  
Tracey Troy, recorder

**CITIZENS & VISITORS PRESENT**

Scott McCaffrey  
Rodney Grady  
Clifton Ballard  
Charlie Malone

Henry B. Robbins  
Frank Willis  
Craig Suggs

Council Member Ballard led the Invocation.  
Mayor Willis called January 18, 2024, meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**ADJUSTMENT & APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Clerk asked for the following items to be added to the agenda:

1. Resolution for Opposing Toll Bridge
2. Recommendation to accept Brunswick County Grant for Replacement of some facilities at Navassa Park.
3. Council Retreat Date
4. Duke Energy letter about transmission line right away vegetation maintenance.
5. Quote for PD Blinds.

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE REQUESTED ADDITIONS. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

The Board discussed the Duke Energy Letter about transmission line right away vegetation maintenance and decided it wasn't an action item and opted to remove it from agenda.

Councilwoman Dixon asked that Quote for the PD Blinds be removed from the agenda.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH NECESSARY CORRECTION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Updates**

Ms. Bray gave the board the following report:

1. 3 Road Crossings:

- a. -Preliminary Surveys & Base Mapping (90% Complete)

Desktop review and survey project planning completed to determine anticipated utility owners.

Survey control points set in preparation for field work.

Survey field work completed. All mapping completed except SUE drafting.

- b. Hydraulics Design (2% Complete)

Data collection of FEMA flood models and FRIS models

Preliminary culvert calculations

- c. -Roadway Design (5% Complete)

Project management and coordination in progress

- d. Structure Design (1% Complete)

- e. Project management and coordination in progress

- f. Natural Resource Assessment (30% Complete):

- g. Site visit – complete

WOUS delineation

Threatened and endangered species survey

PJD package – in progress

Report summarizing findings of field investigation – in progress.

2. DOT MUP:

- a. The appraisals for the church and Patricia White will begin. A package will be sent to the appraiser this week. It should take about 45 days, then the NCDOT must review the appraisals and approve them.

- b. Follow up with Brunswick County will be done to see the status of their easement, donation of the easement is an option.

3. New Town Hall: I haven't been included in the walk through or discussion that has taken place on the project.

- a. Claudia, I understand from Chuck that the Town wants to know that the punch list items to date have been completed. Other than the additional caulking we are requesting Registers Glass tackle, I feel these are complete. Please note that PCB still must complete the water line connection and installation of the storefront entry door (which we are holding off on until the upfit work is complete to protect these doors). After payment of this pay application, you will still be holding \$11,110 of this contract until that the

final scope is complete. Also, there was some mention of establishing a 3-person committee of town administrators to oversee the final phase of this work. I have not yet heard when or where this group is meeting. We would very much like to move forward with this scope of work and ask that you have this committee contact me as soon as possible to coordinate. Please share this email with members of the town administration and ask them to provide any comment. PCB is anxious to get payment for this invoice and we would like to handle any concerns they may have as soon as possible.

- b. Gentlemen enjoyed meeting everyone on site this morning. As discussed, I have attached the latest permit files for Phase 2 of the project. Please review and advise if there are any required changes. I have also attached what is the latest civil design form Right Angle Engineering. If you have any suggested changes here, please contact Shane Lippard at Right Angle directly.
- c. Notification to bid needs to be given.

4. NFWF Projects – Indian Creek, Waterfront, Stormwater, Moze Heritage:
  - a. The projects are moving forward.
  - b. CAMA General Permit application for the pier and kayak launch at the Navassa Waterfront project will be submitted.

Mayor Willis gave the following updates:

1. Feasibility Study is ongoing with the project on Cedar Hill Road this project wants to tie into the Gullah Geechee sites that are historical. He will ask Ms. Rose Terry to attend meeting.
2. Brunswick County will be replacing the entire water system in Navassa this may impact citizens.
3. Cape Fear Memorial Bridge closing and how it would affect Navassa Citizens.

**COUNCILMAN MOORING MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION OPPOSING TOLL BRIDGE FOR CAPE FEAR MEMORIAL BRIDGE. ALL VOTED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Resolution Opposing Toll Bridge for Cape Fear Memorial Bridge**

**Resolution Opposing Toll Bridge for Cape Fear Memorial Bridge**

**WHEREAS**, the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge was first opened to automobile traffic on October 1, 1969; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge, since its opening 1969, has been the primary link for US 17, US 76, and US 421 between Brunswick and New Hanover counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge has been an indispensable conduit for regional transportation and economic development throughout the counties of Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender, which on average accommodates more than 65,000 trips per day; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge is a critical element in facilitating freight movement to and from the most efficient port in North America, the Port of Wilmington; and,

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has identified the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge as a structure in need replacement due to its age and cost of maintenance; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization passed resolution on February 23, 2022, to urge consideration of all possible options to included tolling and previous proposals to fund the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge; and,

**WHEREAS**, the NCDOT's proposed replacement alternatives and design considerations for the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge currently include the use of tolling as a viable financing alternative; and,

**WHEREAS**, the payment of tolls has not previously been employed as a financing method for the replacement of any existing transportation facility anywhere in the history North Carolina; and,

**WHEREAS**, tolling the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge would impose a disproportionate financial burden on Wilmington and southeastern North Carolin relative to any other area of the state; and,

**WHEREAS**, tolling would also have an incredible negative impact on the commerce that uses the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge on a regular basis; and,

**WHEREAS**, tolling would have a disproportionately acute negative impact on traditionally disadvantaged persons.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council for the City of Wilmington wishes to express its overwhelming resolve against the use of any tolls as a financing method for costs associated with the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Wilmington City Council hereby challenges the State of North Carolina, through the NCDOT, to derive a more equitable funding alternative for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge, one that ensures the economic vitality of the region without placing disproportionate costs on the users of an already existing vital regional transportation link.

Adopted this the 18<sup>TH</sup> day of January 2024 in Navassa, North Carolina.

**Brunswick County Grant for Navassa Township Park**

Mayor Willis informed the Board that Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department has a grant that will replace and upgrade the following areas at the Navassa Township Park; Basketball Court, Playground, and replacing the Tennis Court with another Basketball Court. This project will begin March with an estimated completion date of two months.

**COUNCILWOMAN DIXON MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN LOWE TO ACCEPT THE GRANT FROM BRUNSWICK COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION FOR THE UPGRADING OF NAVASSA TOWNSHIP PARK. ALL VOTED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Mayor Pro Tem**

Mayor Willis opens the floor for comments from board members there being no he called for nomination.

Councilman Ballard nominate Councilman Merrick.  
Councilman Mooring nominated himself.

**COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN LOWE TO CLOSE THE NOMINATION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

Mayor Willis called for a vote by a show of hands.  
Councilman Merrick received 3-Yeas, Council people Merrick, Lowe, Ballard.  
Councilman Mooring received 2- Yeas, Council people Mooring, Dixon.

Councilman Merrick was named Mayor Pro Tem by the winning vote.

**Organizational Meeting Date**

The Board held a discussion and will hold an Organizational Meeting and Retreat on the same date. After discussion it was decided this meeting will be held January 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.

**Workshop Date with Carl Davis**

Mayor Willis informed the board of the date that Mr. Davis would meet with the board for the workshop for the Municipal Building. A discussion was held with the clerk being asked to obtain more dates and times for this workshop.

**Resolution for Community Center Waiver**

The Planner presented the Board with the Resolution and board members requesting additional changes to resolution.

**COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO TABLE THE RESOLUTION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

**LGC Audit Response Letter**

The Board reviewed the drafted letter to the LGC for the Audit Response.

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO APPROVE THE DRAFTED LETTER TO LGC FOR AUDIT RESPONSE. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

The following update was given:

1. The grant for renovation of Navassa Township Park.
2. Phoenix Sign repair.
3. Davis Creek sign repair.
4. Road Maintenance on Navassa Township Park.

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Holland updated the board on the following:

1. Identifying problems areas regarding Code Enforcement will begin soon, targeting areas that have junk cars, overgrown lots and dilapidated homes. Will speak with planning board about procedures and sending only a friendly letter requesting that issue be taken care of.
2. A road inventory will begin next month, doing a windshield inspection. This will enable the development of a Capital Improvement Plan for Roads.
3. Indigo West has 400 homes, 40 Townhomes on their preliminary plats and informed the council that the final plat does not come to council for approval.
4. Will discuss a Road Ordinance at the retreat.
5. A final zoning for the boat lift (Forklift) has been issued and they will be up in operational.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Councilwoman Dixon spoke about the pending traffic that will occur when the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge is closed for incoming traffic to Wilmington.

Chief Thomas informed the board and citizens that they will be monitoring the extra traffic that will be flowing through Cedar Hill. Also, reminded the public that the curve on Cedar Hill Road is dangerous especially at night so caution is needed in that area.

The Board was presented with two Budget Ordinances for adoption.

**FY 2023-2024 Budget Ordinance Amendment**

**BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Governing Board of the Town of Navassa, North Carolina, that the following amendments are made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund to transfer funds as follows:

**General Fund Amendments**

<b><u>Account Number</u></b>	<b><u>Account Description</u></b>	<b><u>Increase</u></b>	<b><u>(Decrease)</u></b>
10-4300-03	Custodian		\$1,123.50
10-4300-30	Building Maintenance	\$1,123.50	

Adopted this the 18<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.

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**General Fund Amendments**

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>(Decrease)</u>
10-4300-00	Salaries		
\$13,805.43			
10-4300-70	Vehicle Purchase	\$13,805.43	

Adopted this the 18<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.

**COUNCILWOMAN DIXON MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO ADOPT THE BUDGET AMENDMENTS ORDINANCE O-2024-01 AND O-2024-02. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

**COUNCIL REMARKS**

Councilman Ballard informed the board that he has submitted Clifton Ballard and Janice Robbins names to the clerk for the cemetery committee.

Councilwoman Lowe stated she is eager to work and awaiting organizational assignment.

Mayor Willis informed the board that he received a request for a driveway repair from a disabled citizen. The Resident reported that EMS was unable to drive in their yard due to driveway damage. He is requesting a decision from the board regarding the matter.

Councilwoman Dixon suggested having Councilman Mooring evaluate the situation and bring back the solution.

Councilman Merrick stated no comment regarding the matter.

Councilwoman Lowe agreed that he should inspect the driveway, but the board do not make a decision today.

Councilman Ballard asked if the Town has the equipment to repair the driveway and reminded the board that if you do for one then you will have to do for others.

Councilman Mooring suggested having the resident pay for the dirt and having it spread with the Town only dumping the soil.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Craig Suggs suggests that the new Town Hall front portion of the building should be bricked.

Scott McCaffrey asked the board if Robin Court could be paved or turned over to him.

Clifton Ballard commends the Police Chief for recognizing that the curve is dangerous that is located near Rose Terry home and marking is needed for that dangerous area.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MOORING TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

COUNCILWOMAN DIXON MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO ADJUST THE SALARY TO THE OFFER LETTER THAT WAS MADE. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

**ADJOURNMENT**

COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN LOWE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

**ATTEST:**

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**Town Clerk**

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**Mayor Pro Tem**