

## NAVASSA REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

March 21, 2024

7:30 P.M.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Eulis Willis, Mayor  
William Ballard, Councilman  
LaTonyia Lowe, Councilman

Jerry Merrick, Councilman  
Ida Dixon, Councilwoman  
Ernest Mooring, Councilman

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Norwood Blanchard, Attorney  
Landin Holland, Planner  
Quisha Booker, Admin. Assistant

Michelyn Alston, Clerk  
Dale Thomas, Police Chief

### **CITIZENS & VISITORS PRESENT**

Veronica Kelly  
Norris Merrick  
Denise Shaw

Berleana Kelly  
Clifton Ballard  
CJ Malone

Council Member Ballard led the Invocation.  
Mayor Willis called March 21, 2024, meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

### **ADJUSTMENT & APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN DIXON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUETS**

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

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Project Updates**

Holland reported progress on the stormwater project, meeting with Christian preziosi on March 22nd to plan the next steps. He expressed hope for progress on two waterfront parks. Additionally, the council discussed access to the county tax parcel and a 20-foot easement on Cedar Hill Road. They're also collaborating with the Department of Transportation to finalize a purchase agreement for a three-parcel project, facilitating design work previously discussed.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Cash Management Central Depository*

COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCIL WOMAN LOWE TO USE THE RECOMMENDED NCLM MAS PROGRAM BEST PRACTICE—CASH MANAGEMENT CENTRAL DEPOSITORY. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

### *Upfit Estimate*

Landin Holland, the town planner, reported that he received an estimate of \$804,800 from Hipp Architecture. He is awaiting authorization to proceed with the bidding process. Holland mentioned that Mr. Hip collaborated with other firms' builders to ensure the estimate's accuracy. It's described as a conservative estimate of the proposed cost, and Holland is prepared to move forward with the formal bidding process.

COUNCILMEMBER MOORING MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO PROCEED WITH THE BIDDING PROCESS. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

### *Port City Builders Change Order#6*

During the Navassa town council meeting, the town planner discussed a meter changeover previously discussed with the council. The mayor suggested it should be addressed in the budget meeting. The planner agreed to consult Claudia Bray regarding the budget. Councilman Merrick expressed confidence in the budget's adequacy. The lawyer clarified that the necessary funds are already allocated, eliminating the need for a budget amendment. The planner emphasized that the council's approval is solely for the changeover itself.

COUNCILMEMBER MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN LOWE TO APPROVE THE CHANGE ORDER NUMBER 6 FOR PORT CITY BUILDER. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

### *Community Center activity*

Councilwoman Lowe presented a request from Mr. Glenn Dowe for permission to reserve the community center every other Monday from 6-8PM to teach Line Dancing, starting April 22nd, 2023. This request will be revisited annually to ensure it doesn't conflict with the town business.

COUNCILWOMAN LOWE MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN JERRY MERRICK THAT GLENN DOWE AND THE LINE DANCERS TO USE THE COMMUNITY CENTER EVERY OTHER MONDAY TO TEACH LINE DANCING, REVISITING REQUEST EACH YEAR. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR

### *Economic Development Liaison*

Mayor asked that Councilman be able to attend summit for Economic Development.

**COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN BALLARD FOR COUNCILMAN MOORING TO BE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LIAISON. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

### *Parks and Recreation Liaison*

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK FOR COUNCILWOMAN LOWE TO BE THE PARKS AND RECREATION LIAISON. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

### **PARKS AND RECREATION**

The mayor addressed the council regarding the need for enhancements to Phoenix Park, emphasizing the importance of community recreation spaces. He formally submitted a letter requesting a significant allocation of funds, specifically \$400,000, to initiate improvements at Phoenix Park. The proposed enhancements include the construction of a much-needed concession stand to better serve visitors and residents alike. The mayor highlighted the potential benefits of this investment, emphasizing the positive impact it could have on community engagement and overall quality of life in Navassa.

### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

- 1. Street Maintenance Update:** The town planner provided a comprehensive update on ongoing street maintenance initiatives. He reported that formal bids had been solicited for the repaving of Church Street and Forrest Hill Drive, two critical thoroughfares within the town. Additionally, the planner expressed concerns regarding ongoing construction traffic issues on Ivestor Ct. He outlined plans to address these concerns in coordination with the relevant developers. The estimated cost for the proposed maintenance projects was discussed, with figures ranging between \$200,000 and \$208,000. The planner assured the council that firm estimates would be available in the coming month, allowing for informed decision-making regarding project prioritization and budget allocation.
- 2. Lena Springs Road Acceptance:** The planner provided an update on efforts to finalize the acceptance of Lena Springs Road. He indicated that an engineer had been engaged to submit a proposal outlining the necessary steps for the town's acceptance of the road infrastructure. It was noted that any associated costs would be deferred to the developer responsible for the construction of Lena Springs Road. The planner emphasized the importance of ensuring that the road met all necessary standards and specifications before formal acceptance by the town.
- 3. Code Enforcement:** The planner provided an update on efforts to finalize the acceptance of Lena Springs Road. He indicated that an engineer had been engaged to submit a proposal outlining the necessary steps for the town's acceptance of the road infrastructure. It was noted that any associated costs would be deferred to the developer responsible for the construction of Lena Springs Road. The planner emphasized the importance of ensuring that the road met all necessary standards and specifications before formal acceptance by the town.

4. **Project Update:** The planner provided an update on the progress of the Blust development project, a significant undertaking within the town. He indicated that plans were underway to present an alternative approach to the council at the next meeting, outlining a comprehensive strategy for advancing the project. Additionally, the planner reported that seventeen permits had been issued for various aspects of the project, including the development of lakes within the community. He expressed optimism regarding the project's trajectory and its potential to enhance the town's infrastructure and amenities.

5. **Building and Ground Maintenance:** The planner informed the council of recent efforts to solicit quotes from local companies for mowing services. He outlined plans to secure formal quotes for the maintenance of cemeteries, town properties, rights-of-way, and parks. The council welcomed these initiatives, recognizing the importance of proactive maintenance in preserving the aesthetic appeal and functionality of public spaces within Navassa.

6. **Community Cleanup:** The planner proposes a town-wide cleanup during pre-clean-up week with Brunswick County Landfill (April 15th-20th). DOT and GFL will provide resources, including trash bags and tools, for a litter clean-up organized between April 13th and April 27th. GFL will also provide roll-out dumpsters. The planner asks the council to decide on a date for the town's community cleanup effort.

7. **Building Signage:** The town planner gathered quotes for building signage and presented two options. The council unanimously approved a new fee schedule.

#### **Planning New Fee Schedule**

The planner stated the only change that he put on the fee schedule is that he zero out the annexation fees. He also stated if it's the pleasure of the board to approve the new fee schedule, that would be beneficial.

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO APPROVE THE NEW FEE SCHEDULE TO GO IN AFFECT IMMEDIATLEY. UNAMIOUSLY PASSED.**

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Councilwoman Dixon addressed concerns regarding a curve on the highway, reporting her communication with NCDOT to improve its safety. Additionally, she reached out to Representative Miller to secure additional equipment for the police department.

The Police Chief mentioned discussions with Sheriff Chisel, resulting in the decision to donate three cars and computers to the town via the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office. Approval from the board is needed to accept these donations.

**COUNCILWOMAN DIXON MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MOORING TO ACCEPT THE VEHICHLES FROM BRUNSWICK COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

#### **COUNCILMEMBER REPORT**

Councilman Mooring informed the council about an event center he and the mayor had visited, which is relevant to the board's interests. He mentioned a government program used by small towns to build roads, where the town only invests in materials. Mooring expressed his intent to investigate this program further.

Additionally, he announced plans to explore obtaining a conception plan from UNCW to initiate the downtown development process.

### **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Mr. Norris Merrick raised questions concerning property tax in the city of Leland and whether it would impact Navassa. He also inquired about the potential effects of fire or EMT fees on Navassa. The mayor clarified that these matters wouldn't affect Navassa and emphasized that it's within the Navassa council's jurisdiction to determine factors influencing the town's taxes.

**COUNCILMAN BALLARD MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MERRICK TO ADOPT THE LETTERHEAD. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION-PERSONNEL**

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

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

**COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN BALLARD TO HIRE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/PLANNER LANDIN HOLLAND EFFECTIVE MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

**COUNCILMAN MERRICK MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN LOWE ASKING PERMISSION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PURCHASING OF TWO SHIRTS FOR COUNCILMEMBERS. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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