



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 8:00AM
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC
Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental Monthly Meeting held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 was called to order at 8:01 AM.
2 Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present, opened the meeting and stated there will be a public comment
3 period if anyone would like to speak. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for the meeting were
4 available through the Town's website at www.TownofOriental.com.

5
6 Present: Mayor Belangia, Mayor Pro Tempore White, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Price, Commissioner
7 Simmons, Commissioner Winfrey, Town Manager Diane Miller, Deputy Finance Director Tammy Cox, Officer Nic
8 Blayney, and members of the public. The Mayor opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

9
10 The Agenda was approved by a **MOTION** from Commissioner Overcash, seconded by Commissioner Winfrey.
11 Unanimous vote: 5-0.

12
13 The Consent Agenda was approved by a **MOTION** from Commissioner Overcash, seconded by Mayor Pro
14 Tempore White. Unanimous vote: 5-0.

15
16 Public Comment: Mr. Sam Myers, representing the Oriental Rotary Club, requested street closings for the annual
17 Rotary Car Show scheduled for October 16, 2021. Roads requested were South Ave at South and Neuse (both
18 directions), South and King, South and Freemason to Kip's driveway, South at Mildred to the entrance of the Neuse
19 River Suites, and the use of Lou Mac Park. Mayor Pro Tempore White made the MOTION to grant the request.
20 Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0 approved.

21
22 Mrs. Madeleine Sutter requested that we look into reducing the speed limit on Whittaker Point Road as the new
23 construction, and even trash truck traffic have been significantly exceeding the posted 25MPH limit. She also
24 requested that the Board be aware that the NCGA is attempting to pass legislation that removes the Town's right to
25 regulate urban forestry within its limits. Manager Miller notes that speed limit changes are part of Ordinance and
26 have to be changed by a change in the Ordinance. Also, noted that the proposed legislation regulates ability to
27 regulate private trees. Our current tree Ordinance only regulates Town trees in the ROW. This legislation affects
28 something we do not currently do.

29
30 Ms. Bonnie Crosser addresses street signage proposal and requests information concerning where the funding comes
31 from for such. Manager noted that we do already have a line item for street signage and that any additional signage
32 specifically aimed at directing tourists to Town facilities is absolutely able to be paid from Occupancy Tax directed
33 to tourism related activities. The proposal initiated gives us a consistent approach, noting previous conversations that
34 pointed out we were not being consistent with signage and directions. The additional notation on brochures and
35 maps in the website would add to that consistency. Manager showed the apparatus for installing street signage,
36 noting that there is a bracket that would allow us to add a non-intrusive blade with directional arrow to existing
37 cross-street signage.

38
39 SUP Public Hearing: Short term rental for 404 Main St. Manager Miller introduces the property with graphic on the
40 powerpoint. All property owners were notified within 150 ft. There was no response to the Planning Board
41 regarding this request. Planning Board's recommendation to approve is attached. Police have reported no calls on
42 that address, parking is adequate. Property is an R-2, which is why it is in front of you. One communication from a
43 resident near the property objected, but understands that the burden of proof is evidentiary.

44 Mayor Belangia (SB) asks for a motion to open the Public Hearing.
45 Mayor Pro Tempore White (DW) makes a **MOTION** to open the Public Hearing. Commissioner Overcash (CO)
46 seconds. 5-0 Public Hearing is OPEN.

47 SB: Let's go through
48 DW: Sally, if you don't mind, I'll make notes and then summarize in one motion at the end.
49 SB: OK. Sounds good.
50
51 The Town Commissioners shall issue the requested permit UNLESS:
52
53 The permit is not within its jurisdiction (property is within jurisdiction of TOO)
54 Does the Public have any comment on jurisdiction of the application?
55 Commissioner questions?
56
57 (SB): The next one- The application is incomplete (the application has been deemed complete by the Land Use
58 Administrator and the Planning Board.)
59 Does the Public have any comment on the completeness of the application?
60 Commissioner questions?
61 If completed as proposed:
62 -will not comply with one or more requirements of this chapter (GMO)
63 Does any of the Public have any evidence to offer concerning compliance with the GMO?
64 Any Commissioner questions?
65 will materially endanger public health or safety
66 Does any member of the public have any comment on the safety?
67 Commissioner questions?
68 will substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property
69 Does any member of the Public have any evidence that shows that the project will injure the value of adjoining or
70 abutting property?
71 Commissioner questions?
72 will not be in harmony with existing uses/development in the area.
73 Does any member of the public have any evidence that the project is not in harmony with the existing uses in the
74 area?
75 Commissioner questions? OK.
76 e) will not be in conformity of the Land Use Plan or other plan, officially adopted by the Town.
77 Does any member of the public have evidence that the project is not in conformity with the existing plans?
78 Any Commissioner questions?
79 Alright.
80 DW I'll make the MOTION to close the Public Hearing. Commissioner Overcash seconds. 5-0
81 SB- any discussion? All those in favor of closing the Public Hearing say Aye-(Commissioners unanimously say
82 "aye". Opposed (no comment). Public Hearing is closed.
83
84 Mayor Pro Tempore White makes a **MOTION** to approve the request because:
85 The application is in our jurisdiction, the application is complete, the application will comply with the GMO in
86 aspects and no evidence was submitted here or at the Planning Board meetings that this would be endangerment of
87 public health, affect property value, is in harmony, be inconsistent with current uses, or be in conflict with existing
88 plans. Commissioner Winfrey seconds. Commissioner Simmons says statute requires us to vote for this, BUT asks
89 the Planning Board to look into the procedure that allows this to happen so frequently. I don't know that we want
90 the whole town to be short term rentals. Commissioner Overcash notes it is a quasi-judicial proceeding. Mayor Pro
91 Tempore White agrees it may be time to look at this again. Commissioner Winfrey asks if we can get the number of
92 STRs we already have in town. Manager notes we can get that number. 5-0 SUP is granted.
93
94
95 Audit Contract: Previous auditor is backing away from Municipal Audits this year due to significant COVID issues
96 in his office as well as several members of staff recently giving birth and therefore more vulnerable to taking
97 infection home. We may get them back following. Part of approval, seen in the budget amendment is an increase
98 over the approved cost, due to receipt of significant grant funding in the last fiscal year requiring additional
99 paperwork on our end. Commissioner Overcash makes a **MOTION** that we approve the contract with the new

100 auditor. Commissioner Simmons seconds. No discussion. 5-0. Manager notes due date is moved out from October
101 31, same as last year, due to recurring COVID issues.

102
103 Potential change to election cycle: Manager notes we have had this discussion over the years several times, and the
104 realization that total changeover is possible has been noted as not the best thing for the Town, however, we are not
105 in a position to change that for this cycle currently. While many local municipalities have moved their elections to
106 March (forced by the State in districted elections), we have not. Process to change to 4-year staggered terms is a
107 three month process, which would put the change to be accepted on Election Day 2021. Manager recommends that
108 once the new Board is seated in December, they look at the pros/cons of staggering/lengthening terms to prevent
109 total turnover. State has not forced us all into even year elections YET, but it is possible that may happen in the
110 future.

111
112 Budget Amendment: This amendment adjusts the hiring range for both Public Works and Admin to cover the shift
113 in hiring requirements. We have had an open position in Public Works for more than eight months and are about to
114 lose an admin staffer. This puts us perilously close to being unable to meet the separation of duties requirement of
115 the audit, or hire into Public Works. Without the amendment, we would have to reassess priorities as we will not
116 have adequate staff to process the requests. In addition, there is a \$1,900 amendment to the audit fees for additional
117 requirements due. In audit contract item, Manager previously noted \$1,500 more. The actual cost is \$1,900 more.
118 Commissioner Price confirms that this puts us in the state hiring range as noted from our NCLM salary study. There
119 has been a shift where retail and service outlets have significantly increased hiring ranges that we were not
120 competing with. A **MOTION** from Commissioner Overcash, seconded by Commissioner Simmons. Unanimous
121 vote: 5-0.

122
123 9/11 Commemoration Service: Commissioner Overcash requests the closing of Hodges St on 9/11 (Saturday from
124 8:30AM through approximately 8:45AM-9AM) for remembrance of those lost on 9/11. Station 19 will park at rail
125 (Town Dock 1)- requested cones/tape to prevent parking in that spot at that time. Moment of silence at 8:46AM.
126 Playing of Taps following. Commissioner Overcash makes **MOTION** to approve street closing as presented.
127 Commissioner Winfrey seconds. 5-0.

128
129 Street End Signage- After much discussion, Mayor Pro Tempore White forwarded a Motion to institute new signage
130 that is consistent across all of our facilities. This way all facilities will be labeled in the same way in the same places
131 throughout town. Mayor Pro Tempore White reads **MOTION:** *The Commissioners support the Tourism Board's*
132 *action plan of updating Oriental's Brochure, Oriental's Street Map, and other printed material as the Tourism*
133 *Board deems fit indicating that the three street ends at Wall St., King St. and Neuse St. with benches are public*
134 *viewing areas. The Commissioners also support the Tourism Board's action of placing artwork, as described in*
135 *their presentation to the Commissioners August 2, 2021, on the back of each bench. We ask the Tourism Board to*
136 *work with the Town Manager to make sure the updated Brochure, Street Map and other material as the Tourism*
137 *Board deems fit are included in the Town's website modernization approved for this fiscal year. We had previously*
138 *authorized the Town Manager to replace the missing street signs at Wall St. and Neuse St. consistent with the*
139 *placement of other street signs on South Avenue. Commissioners also ask the Town Manager to place another sign*
140 *on Wall St., King St. and Neuse St. with an arrow pointing to the location of the three public viewing benches with*
141 *the words Public Viewing Bench. Since it has been brought to our attention that we do not have signage at many of*
142 *our water assets, we ask the Town Manager to develop and place signs at our water assets – such as but not limited*
143 *to Town Dock One and Two, Public Rest Rooms, Net House, Town Beach, Fishing Pier, Dingy [sic] Dock, Small*
144 *Boat Launching Dock, Parks (Water, Dog and Recreational). Where appropriate the new signage should be placed*
145 *on street signs with an arrow indicating the location, or on the asset themselves. Commissioner Overcash seconds.*
146 Discussion: Commissioner Simmons notes that we want to make sure all of our assets are available and accessible
147 because “that’s our bread and butter”. Commissioner Overcash reinforcing the Manager’s concept of consistency.
148 Mayor Pro Tempore White notes we do not currently have consistency- some assets are labeled, some not. 5-0.

149
150

151 Appointment- Noting that the Planning Chair, Julie Rahm is present, the Planning Board presents, for your approval,
152 Mr. Tom Quigley, as a candidate for the Planning Board. Commissioner Overcash makes the **MOTION** to approve
153 the appointment. Commissioner Price seconds. 5-0.
154

155 Holiday Schedule: The Manager apologizes- This should have been approved with the regular meeting schedule- no
156 additions, Juneteenth added as an alternate floater. The current holiday schedule, with “floaters” allows us to be
157 open, albeit with a smaller staff, more days because some take the named day, while others save it for a time of their
158 choosing. Commissioner Simmons makes a **MOTION** to approve the holiday schedule. Commissioner Winfrey
159 seconds. 5-0.
160

161 Police Report: Officer Blayney. A lot of work on the GCC grant- have received some of the equipment. Getting
162 ready to close out the grant. Additional radios were offered by private citizen- we were at the mercy of those during
163 Hurricane Florence- this will allow us to have two on the charger all the time, in order to maintain communications.
164 Also- MS Bike same day as 9/11 event- hoping bicyclists not on Hodges during this event. Speeding device to help
165 enforce speeding issues are in, software installed, officer Wichrowski is trained on the use, ready to install sign to
166 gather data first, then monitor and ticket. Car is almost available to be picked up- radio on backorder- graphics were
167 being installed last week. Also asked the Board to consider keeping the Charger to use as speeding deterrent and
168 also as a backup if one of the vehicles in use needs maintenance. Commissioners agree with this plan, noting that
169 our costs for maintenance of that vehicle has become fiscally prohibitive. Whittaker Point Rd was already on the list
170 of roads needing enhanced enforcement. Commissioner Overcash asks if the data is remotely accessible or needs to
171 be downloaded- it needs to be downloaded.
172

173
174 Manager’s Report: Manager Miller discussed the Financial Reports as provided. NCDOT fix for Broad and Hodges
175 – was doing some excavation last week to alleviate the flooding there. NCDOT is still working on it. Start thinking
176 about topics for September workshop. We are heading toward the apex of hurricane season- all paperwork is online
177 and downloadable. Legislative updates are in your package. Manager notes a few: NCGA looking at the tree bill as
178 described earlier, removing municipal power to regulate how many districts can have multi-unit housing, ability to
179 require annexation for extension of water utility, also requiring a residential structure is currently required on a
180 residential lot prior to erection/plan submission for an accessory structure- NCGA trying to remove that and allow
181 ONLY accessory structures on lots. Officers will be out Sept 22-23 for training. ARPA progress, generator is
182 ordered, chlorine alarm is installed, other things getting ready to move forward. ARPA SOG conversations note that
183 we can overspend the first tranche of funds, knowing a second tranche is coming next July 1. (\$137,000 each tranche)
184 and back that into the year spent. Noted delays in manufacturing will delay some of that progress. Road repair-
185 noted changes with the directed priorities- engineer engaged for review of Neuse at Beach. In addition, South Water
186 will require engineering to set the grade and drainage- we had not budgeted that. Mildred was next from Brantley’s
187 to Pittman Circle, but expected construction for new hardware- might need to delay that. Might want to re-address
188 the list at your workshop. Additionally, Hodges Street has shown new and accelerating significant issues that will
189 also require engineering sooner than later. Census numbers- we pushed really hard to get Census filled out- we
190 know there are at least 30 new residences in town, population has decreased officially from 928 to 880. All the
191 funds we received- FEMA, Powell funds, social services money all tied to population. We did not accurately
192 respond to the Census. Also need to decide whether or not we should dispose of the old dump truck, now that the
193 new was received. Can likely get a decent amount for the old truck in condition it is now. Commissioners agree to
194 keep the Charger, and offer the old dump truck for disposition. Manager will bring the paperwork to the next
195 meeting.
196

197 Commissioner Comments: Commissioner Price noted the Dawson Creek Bridge will be out for about a year here
198 shortly. Bridges between here and Bayboro replacement has been indefinitely postponed. Mayor Pro Tempore White
199 notes we should be looking at street priorities at our workshop. Commissioner Simmons encourages citizens to
200 contact State Legislators if concerned by the legislative notes we heard today- they WILL respond to citizen issues.
201

202 Next meetings scheduled: Town Board Meeting – The Board will meet in a workshop Tuesday, September 30, 2021
203 at 8:00AM.
204

205
206 Commissioner Simmons made a **MOTION** to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Winfrey. Unanimous vote: 5-0.
207

208 Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:58AM.
209

210

211

212

213

214 _____
Sally Belangia, Mayor

Diane H. Miller, Town Manager/Clerk

215

216

217

218 Approved _____, 2021



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING

Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 8AM

507 Church Street, Oriental, NC

Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating

6 The Town Board of Oriental Town Board Meeting on September 30, 2021 was called to order at 8:03AM. Mayor
7 Belangia determined a quorum to be present and called the meeting to order. The meeting was open to the public.
8 All documents for the meeting were available through the Town's website at www.TownofOriental.com.

9
10 Present: Mayor Belangia, Mayor Pro Tempore White, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Price, Commissioner
11 Simmons, Commissioner Winfrey, Town Manager Diane Miller, Deputy Finance Director Tammy Cox, Public
12 Works Director Andrew Cox, and Commissioner Candidate Frank Roe.

13
14 The Agenda was approved by a MOTION from Commissioner Simmons, Second by Commissioner Winfrey. 5-0.

15
16 Roads Assessment: Manager introduces the plan as presented. Some things that may not show up in the survey that
17 you may want to address in discussion. One is the curb transitions like those installed when NCDOT repaved Hwy
18 55. We would do those when repaving roads with curb and gutter. The Road Assessment (as discussed previously,
19 does NOT include drainage issues, traffic volume, construction pending. Also, as discussed before, we are not
20 likely to pave a road that is slated for heavy construction, has no traffic, or has significant drainage issues without
21 addressing all of the other issues as well. Note that the Board allocated \$200,000 from Powell reserve and this year's
22 allotment (received \$18,000 this week [1/2 annual allotment]) for road repair. Manager notes we believe we can get
23 at least the culvert replacement at Neuse Dr. paid from ARPA, but not the road.

24
25 Manager has engaged engineer for Neuse/Ragan issue. There are several problems. The existing culvert is centered
26 in the wrong direction, drainage is backed up somewhere along the frontage of the Bond property, so further up
27 Neuse Drive is all blocked and pooling. Water AND sewer lines run across the top of the culvert. Engineer is
28 considering concrete cast culvert to replace- expecting design and drawings shortly. Expected to be large expense.

29
30 In addition, the survey done in 2020 does not take into account damage that has appeared since. Following
31 inspection by contractor, Hodges St has new, significant alligating, sinking, eruption, and separation from the
32 pavement/seawall. It is possible that there is failure in the seawall. Manager asks for direction to address by
33 engineering survey/design those issues. Board has previously designated Hodges St, due to high profile, the
34 necessity to keep it viable. Board agrees to have engineer assess, bring back assessment prior to initiating design.

35
36 South Water Street repair is estimated at \$166,000. Contractor will not proceed without engineering confirmation.
37 Board directs Manager to engage engineer to give estimate on design.

38
39 Other small patchwork can be addressed once numbers come in for other projects.

40
41 ARPA funds received amount to \$137,000. Expect another \$137,000 in July- can overspend and back in the
42 reimbursement if we go over the allotment. Board is hesitant to go over. Manager and Dep Finance Director note
43 that we are almost up to the amount received with the Generator and chlorine alarms already in progress.

44
45 Drainage: Manager shows the Board photos of some of our larger issues, including an area at Dolphin Point, High
46 St, Hodges St, Neuse Dr and Windward. These are the issues that block the flow for entire neighborhoods, and thus,
47 the ones that will be addressed first.

48
49 Commissioner Overcash and Commissioner Candidate Roe discuss the potential for an educational campaign to help
50 homeowners to understand that they are responsible for the culvert under their driveway. On attorney advice, we
51 CAN go in, clean it out/replace culvert, relay driveway more cost efficiently than going through legal battle to make
52 them do it. It is suggested that making homeowners aware of their responsibility and noting that this is the largest
53 complaint in town (drainage) may help unplug SOME of the issues. In addition, we can contact our drain clearing
54 contractor and ask for a rate to have them in town where homeowners can pay to have their culverts blown out at

55 cost. Public Works Director will call contractor and see if that is a possibility. Public Works usually starts its
56 drainage work at this time of year (when the snakes slow down and the growth slows down enough to get into the
57 ditches, as well as hurricane season coming to a close. Progress has been made in undeveloped areas with new
58 attachment to large tractor for clearcutting deep ditches.

59
60 ARPA Updates: The Manager notes that one project is complete- the chlorine gas alarms (safety upgrade to the
61 plant), and the pedestal has been poured for the generator on Well #2. Pedestal must cure for 30 days before placing
62 the generator atop. It will be very similar to the one at Town Hall, and allow us to continue to switch back and forth
63 between two wells in case of extended power outage, noting that the stress on a very expensive pump when we are
64 continuously pumping on one well- approved in the July budget as an ARPA project.

65
66 In addition, the Manager notes the option for premium pay to be paid to workers in critical capacities that remained
67 working in person during the pandemic is authorized by ARPA. These payments can be hourly or lump sum.
68 Manager notes those municipalities considering this are looking at \$1,000 to \$1,200/per employee lump sum for the
69 year March 2020 to March 2021. Our staff worked nonstop, putting themselves at risk dealing with critical
70 infrastructure and keeping the office functions available to the public, handling objects handled by many, processing
71 permits, taking water payments, etc, while Public Works was keeping the water running, doing the daily work,
72 collecting cardboard and green waste, sanitizing high touch surfaces, and Police continued to function in face to face
73 service to the Public for the duration. Other than the Manager, all employees are eligible for this premium pay.
74 Commissioner Simmons asks if there are limits. Limits are \$25,000 per employee. There are others- limited to
75 150% of the state average for that position, can be up to \$13 per hour if paying hourly rate. Commissioner Overcash
76 agrees that this is a good opportunity to reward those who stayed with us and took those risks to keep the Town
77 running. This payment cannot be in lieu of another budgeted payment, but in addition to. Commissioners discuss
78 premium pay in the \$1,500-\$2,000 range. Manager suggests that the Board discuss this further at a regular public
79 open meeting and was directed to add to the October 5th agenda. Also, the payment is required to be accompanied by
80 a policy allowing for the distribution. Manager will get up with SOG for a sample policy addition.

81
82 Commissioners Comments Commissioner Overcash notes that Commissioner Candidate Roe might consider making
83 contact with news outlets to help distribute information concerning what homeowners can do to assist in drainage
84 and ditch clearing

85
86 Commissioner Price notes (as the Mayor is one of the Silverbrook Witches) that the annual Witches Crawl will take
87 place on October 30 at the corner of Neuse and King Sts- and asked for closure during the event. Ms. Cheryl
88 Thompson will bring the details to the Manager. Proceeds go to Hope Clinic this year.

89
90 Commissioner Overcash asked about policy that provides training for staff for certifications that requires them to
91 stay or pay back the cost to the Town. Manager notes we can, but do not currently, have such a policy in place.

92
93 Commissioner Overcash asks about further Short Term Rentals- we had discussed this at the end of the regular
94 September meeting. Manager has taken to the Planning Board and has contacted the attorney for potential
95 adjustment. Currently granted STRs are permitted with SUPs in R-2, R-3, by LUPs in MU and MU-1 zones.
96 CANNOT limit the number of SUPs granted, BUT can limit the zones this can happen in moving forward. For
97 example, can restrict to MU and MU-1, and restrict any additional in R-2 or R-3. Cited case where another
98 municipality attempted to limit the number of SUPs granted. Keep in mind that the General Assembly is taking up
99 new legislation that removes local control over short term rentals altogether.

100
101 Mayor Pro Tempore White notes that the HWAC has discussed hiring contractor with a “not to be exceeded” as the
102 contractor in question will only bill by the hour. Manager will check with the attorney for contracting purposes.
103 Hiring a contractor to be overseen by the Town is the only way this project will get moving because the Town just
104 cannot spare the manpower without losing several named priorities for other projects.

105
106 Commissioner Overcash shows the Board photo of new temporary banners that Parks and Recreation have ordered
107 to be erected and advertise different groups doing events in Town similar to the flounder hat making event during
108 the Flounder Festival. Other Boards may elect to have those made as well.

