



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, November 18, 2025 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
Mayor Sally Belangia officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental regular meeting was held on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, and was called to  
2 order at 6 PM. Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public. All  
3 documents for the meeting were available through the Town's website at [www.TownofOriental.com](http://www.TownofOriental.com). Mayor starts  
4 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

5 Present: Mayor Belangia(SB), Commissioner Overcash(CO), Commissioner Litzenberger(BL), Town  
6 Manager Diane Miller(DM), Finance Officer Lisa Millington, Officer Wichrowski, and members of the Public.  
7 Mayor Pro Tempore Price (AP), Commissioner Crosser(BC) were absent. Mayor calls the meeting to order and starts  
8 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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10 **Date:** 11-18-25

11 **Location:** Town Hall

12 **Meeting Type:** Regular Meeting

13 **Presiding:** Mayor Belangia

14 **Staff Present:** Town Manager Diane Miller, Admin Asst Cyndi St Clair, Police Officer Wichrowski

15 **Commissioners Present:** Commissioners Winfrey, Litzenberger, Overcash, (and incoming board members  
16 observed in audience)

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18 **1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

19 The meeting was called to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A quorum was established.

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21 **2. Approval of the Agenda**

- 22 • CO makes a MOTION to restore Item #7 to the agenda. Seconded by SW
- 23 • Additional motion by BL to add Item #8 concerning training/education budget amendment for incoming  
24 board members. Seconded by CO
- 25 • Motions approved unanimously.

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27 **3. Public Comment**

28 **Speaker: Larry (resident)**

29 Comments included:

- 30 • Issues within *Robert's Rules of Order* that may not fit a monthly-meeting board:  
31 "Reconsider and enter upon the minutes" provision problematic for municipal boards.  
32 Debate time limits (currently two 10-minute sessions per member) too long; suggested alternative limits.
- 33 • Road repair timing concerns:  
34 Water valve replacements and ditch work must occur before repaving to avoid future damage.  
35 Town Manager noted that the Town Attorney has drafted simplified procedural rules for future board  
36 adoption.

37 No further public comments.

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39 **4. Manager's Report**

40 Town Manager Miller provided an extensive operational update:

41 **Water System & Infrastructure**

- 42 • Bay River Water Board seat remains vacant.
- 43 • TRC Water System rehab: awaiting DEQ approval of bid package; Town requires removal of blasting  
44 provisions.
- 45 • Awaiting cost-benefit analysis comparing refurbishing existing building vs. prefab replacement.
- 46 • Received \$121 from ChargePoint for EV charging station.
- 47 • Duke Power vegetation management:
  - 48 ○ Work appears severe but meets required clearance standards (15 ft around high-voltage lines).
  - 49 ○ Inconsistent pruning cycles (7-year rotation) caused significant overgrowth.
  - 50 ○ Cleanup is running behind schedule; residents asked to notify Town if debris remains >1 week.

51 **Events**

- 52 • Witches Crawl and March for Life proceeded successfully.
- 53 • Jingle Bell Run to coincide with Christmas Parade; minimal traffic impact anticipated.

54 **Enforcement Issues**

- 55 • Transient docking violations at Town Dock (beam limit 18 ft, no rafting).
- 56 • Severe water-meter tampering incident; legal action underway.
- 57 • Excessive misuse of trash/green-waste facilities (dumpsters overfilled, contamination with household
- 58 trash).
- 59 • Transient vessels and seasonal property misuse increased.

60 **Financial Notes**

- 61 • Some discrepancies discovered and corrected in posted financials.
- 62 • Revenues below expected 42% threshold; sales & use tax reduced \$20,000 from previous year.
- 63 • Water revenues strong, partly due to PFAS settlement receipts.
- 64 • PFAS testing now using independent lab; additional costs to be offset by PFAS settlement funds.
- 65 • Occupancy tax slightly up; PAL fund balance at \$153,000 with another \$30,000 pending.

66 **Tree Lighting / Holiday Activities**

- 67 • Tree of Light forms available online and in newspaper.
- 68 • December 11: Town-wide cookie exchange, Christmas caroling, youth performances.
- 69 • New board members will serve as holiday light judges.

70 **Christmas Lights / Infrastructure**

- 71 • Sections of Broad Street lighting may be inoperative due to storm damage, fallen limbs, and prior vehicle
- 72 strike.

73 **Project Updates**

- 74 • Dinghy Dock repair bid released; expected to require new vinyl bulkhead landward of current wall.
- 75 • Mixer in water tank being replaced; essential for winter water quality.

76 **Tree Board Work**

- 77 • Dangerous tree removal prioritized through upcoming budget amendment.
- 78 • DEQ Notice of Violation: Town submitted remission request timely; Contractor Harry Bailey addressing
- 79 discrepancies with DEQ.

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81 **5. Auxiliary Board Reports**

- 82 Report relayed on behalf of Marsha (absent) noting:
- 83 • Christmas parade and “Night of Lights” preparations progressing.
  - 84 • Volunteers needed for setup and event support.

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86 **6. Audit Presentation – Cindy Randolph**

- 87 Highlights:
- 88 • **Unmodified (clean) audit opinion** issued.
  - 89 • General Fund unassigned balance: **\$699,175**, a **\$173,000 increase** from prior year.
  - 90 • Property tax collection rate: **96.23%**.
  - 91 • Revenues decreased ~\$12,000; expenditures decreased ~\$244,000.
  - 92 • Water Fund saw positive increase of approx. **\$123,133** (due to rate adjustments and new connections).
  - 93 • New statewide requirement implemented (GASB 101 – compensated absences including sick leave).
  - 94 • No significant deficiencies; timely bank reconciliations commended.
  - 95 • Town financial health assessed as **strong and comparable or superior to similar municipalities**.

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97 **7. Capital Reserve Fund for Roads**

98 Commissioner Overcash introduced the ordinance creating a Capital Reserve Fund for road improvements.

99 **Key Provisions (as amended):**

- 100 • Funding derived from amounts returned to the General Fund following the annual audit, in amounts
- 101 determined by the sitting Board.
- 102 • Additional funds may be added by ordinance.
- 103 • Initial allocation: **\$100,000** from FY 24–25 audit surplus.

104 **Motion passed unanimously.**

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106 **8. Budget Amendments**

107 Two amendments approved:

108 **A. Personnel Compensation Adjustment**

- 109 • Reallocation of unused salary from vacant Police Officer A line to cover merit increases.
- 110 • Total moved: **\$11,331.76.**
- 111 **B. Tree Removal & Board Training**
- 112 • Transfer **\$15,564** from Storm Prep funds to address hazardous tree removals.
- 113 • Additional **\$3,550** allocated for School of Government training for new commissioners and Manager.
- 114 **Both amendments approved unanimously.**

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- 116 **9. Tree Board Ordinance Revision (Chapter M)**
- 117 • Tree Board submitted updated ordinance for future board consideration.
  - 118 • Clarifies authority over *town-owned trees only*.
  - 119 • Increases fines (up to state max \$500).
  - 120 • Addresses contractor violations, root-cutting, and protection requirements.
  - 121 *No action required at this meeting.*

- 122
- 123 **10. Dinghy Dock Bulkhead & Decking Repairs**
- 124 • Seawall failure identified; vinyl sheet-pile bulkhead recommended.
  - 125 • Request for authorization to proceed with bidding and permitting.
  - 126 • Manager requested authority to execute.
- 127 **Motion approved unanimously.**

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- 129 **11. Planning Board Appointment**
- 130 • Appointment of **Kathy Walters** to fill vacated Planning Board seat (Carl Crothers).
  - 131 • Appreciation expressed for Mr. Crothers' service.
- 132 **Motion approved unanimously.**

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- 134 **12. Police Report – Officer Wichrowski**
- 135 Officer Wichrowski reported:
- 136 • Significant increase in **real-estate fraud attempts**, especially targeting vacant lots.
  - 137 • Fraud involves forged IDs, false contact information, fraudulent seller representation.
  - 138 • Some cases nearly reached closing before detection; SBI involved.
  - 139 • Recommended all property owners enroll in the County **Property Check** system for fraud alerts.
  - 140 • Residents urged to report suspicious buyer/seller contacts.

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- 142 **13. Announcements**
- 143 • **Volunteer Appreciation Party:** December 5, 3–5 PM. Bring unwrapped teen gifts for donation drive.
  - 144 • Manager Miller out of office: Dec 15–19, Dec 29–30.
  - 145 • Town Hall closed:
    - 146 ○ Nov 27–28 (Thanksgiving)
    - 147 ○ Dec 24–26 (Christmas)

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- 149 **14. Commissioner Comments**
- 150 • Commissioner expressed appreciation for strong voter turnout.
  - 151 • Confidence voiced in incoming board.

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153 **15. Adjournment**

154 Commissioner Winfrey made a motion to adjourn.

155 Meeting adjourned unanimously.

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160 Sally Belangia , Mayor

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160 Diane H. Miller, Town  
Manager/Clerk

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162 Approved \_\_\_\_\_, 2025