



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 7:00pm
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC
Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental Monthly Meeting held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 was called to order at 7:00pm.
2 Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present and opened the meeting and stated we can have a public
3 comment period if anyone would like to speak. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for the meeting
4 were available through the Town's website at www.TownofOriental.com.

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6 Present: Mayor Belangia, Mayor Pro Tempore White, Commissioner Overcash, Commissioner Simmons,
7 Commissioner Price, Commissioner Barrow, Town Manager Diane Miller, Deputy Finance Director Tammy Cox,
8 Administrative Assistant Chantelle Allison, Police Officer Nic Blayne, County Commissioner Candy Bohmert, and
9 members of the public.

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11 The Agenda was approved by a MOTION from Commissioner Overcash, seconded by Commissioner Simmons.
12 Unanimous vote : 5-0.

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

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17 Public Comment: There were no forwarded messages prior to the meeting, nor did anyone present have comment.

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19 County Board of Elections Resolution with intent to NOT provide additional services for the 2021 November
20 Election: Manager Miller explained that removing the extra service saves the Town thousands of dollars per year.
21 Those services were taken advantage of by a little more than a dozen residents, so the Board decided at the Budget
22 Retreat that voting will be in person Election Day only, for the 2021 November Municipal Election. **Resolution**
23 **2021-03** was approved by a MOTION from Commissioner Barrow, seconded by Commissioner White. Unanimous
24 vote: 5-0.

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26 Whittaker Pointe CAMA permit modification request update: Manager Miller shared the details of her meeting with
27 CAMA, DMF, and Wildlife Resources in response to objections to the request to extend the jetty and add "wing"
28 structures to all the river-side dropdown pile supported structures. The jetty was denied, and the wing structures
29 were approved. The representative from DMF requested that the Town provide a study proving that microscopic
30 larvae could pass through the 2 ½ foot gaps in the dropdowns of the walls. Manager Miller did not agree with the
31 objections and absurd request for a study, and additional conversations were held with the office of the Deputy
32 Secretary of NCDEQ, which may result in further consideration of the permit request. The Whittaker Point road
33 repairs are complete, but we have not received the invoice yet. Per the contractor, the cost will be less than expected
34 since there were not as many bad spots to fix than they thought there would be initially.

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36 Budget Amendment: Amend to move funds to the correct budget lines for the Police Vehicle and Dump Truck, and
37 move funds to correct budget lines for Covid-19 cleanup related costs. The budget amendments were approved by a
38 MOTION from Mayor Pro Tempore White, seconded by Commissioner Overcash. Unanimous vote by roll call: 5-
39 0.

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41 The American Rescue Act: \$250,000 allocated to the Town, possible purposes for these funds include: to make
42 necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure. Manager Miller is awaiting additional guidance
43 but suggested these funds (pending approval through the Act) be used for the Water Plant Softener, road
44 work/culverts, other water system improvements (Chlorine shut-off system, scrubber, other projects). Mayor Pro
45 Tempore White suggested the County and the Town might be able to combine some of these funds to make
46 improvements to shared sewer/water projects.

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Croaker Festival: County Commissioner Candy Bohmert, Marsha Miller, and Missy Baskerville are working on the “Spirit of Independence” Festival, instead of calling it the Croaker-Fest this year. It’s been nicknamed “Flounder Fest” this year, and fireworks will happen on Friday, July 2nd since this is the only date the fireworks production crew is available. Due to current Covid-19 restrictions which may change by July, parade festivities may happen the same way the Town did the Christmas parade (driving parade through town so folks can watch from their homes rather than a large gathering on main streets).

BIRD Scooter Service: Discussion about setting up an electric scooter rental service in Town – no cost to the town, the company would solicit one or two program managers (resident/business owners with space to keep the scooters and ability to recharge them) who are compensated for services of deploying, collecting, recharging, and re-deploying scooters daily in several locations for use by visitors or residents. The scooters are mobile-device friendly via a phone app, there is a minimum of 50 scooters provided, but not all have to be in use at one time. The town would receive \$0.15 for every ride purchased. The Commissioners discussed possible locations for these scooters to be placed for use, potential liability the Town would have, and requested feedback from similar sized towns that have tried out this program.

2019-2020 Audit Review: Manager Miller explained the Audit is confusing because of the extra funds that are in and out of the budget due to Whittaker Pointe restoration. At the end of June 2020, there was \$923,000 in unrestricted funds, and that was the best fiscal position the Town has been in - in a very long time. There is a new requirement to report pension liability/deferred pension. The auditor noted no deficiencies in the Town’s records.

Commissioner Barrow commented on the streetlights, environmental protection, recycling options, expenses for merit raises for employees, and the Town’s Ordinance verbiage regarding amendments and budget by departments. Manager Miller explained the budget is done by department, if any individual department’s overall budget should change by more than \$1000, it would need Commissioner approval. Changes within the department – equally moving/adjusting individual line items – which does not change the department’s total budget, would not need Commissioner approval. The Budget Ordinance is approved by Department. Commissioner Barrow requested that Manager Miller and/or the Town’s attorney review the Budget Ordinance language and perhaps reword it for clarification. He also requested updates on employee merit changes.

Mayor Pro Tempore White inquired if the League gave projections/suggestions for the Town’s budget for the next year. Manager Miller explained that the previous projections were considerably off, and that she would review the new projections as provided but would steer more towards budgeting based off the Town’s actual trends.

Resolution to adjust Powell Bill Map: During the conducting of our street assessment, it was discovered that several corrections need to be made to our Powell Bill Map, including: shorten South Ave by .02 mi, delete Ave A aka Smith Point Rd, change .02 mi of South Ave to Private Rd, add Madison Ave at .38 mi. Powell funds dependent on this map must have approved changes to NCDOT by April 26, 2021 to be included. **Resolution 2021-04** was approved by a MOTION from Mayor Pro Tempore White, seconded by Commissioner Overcash. Unanimous vote : 5-0.

Police Report: Officers Nic Blayney discussed the monthly Police Report. He recounted a call to assist with a boat fire, and the recent increase in calls about raccoons with distemper.

Manager’s Report: Manager Miller reviewed the financial records, discussed a CAMA permit for Whittaker Creek Yacht Harbor, upcoming events: April 10 – Rotary Poker Run, May 1 – Town Wide Yard Sale, May 8 – shred event at Courthouse and bulk waste pickup in Town limits, May 15 – HazMat drop off at Courthouse.

Manager Miller initiated a discussion regarding a request to move one of the Town’s park benches for a wedding; these benches were designed as a permanent fixture and were chained/locked to the ground to prevent movement after previous benches were destroyed by Hurricane Florence. This request was initially denied; however, Manager Miller requested the Board decide and/or make a policy determining whether the park benches may be moved, and that she would act as directed. Mayor Belangia, Commissioners Overcash, Simmons and White did not approve of the benches being moved, Commissioner Price approved of moving the benches, and Commissioner Barrow felt it

102 was the Town Manager's call and would support her decision. No motions were made, the Board agreed 4-1 to
103 support the Town Manager's initial denial and not allow the benches to be moved going forward.

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105 Manager Miller addressed a late entry to the Manager's Report regarding a Resolution submitted by Pineville, NC in
106 opposition to the legislation's proposed zoning reform in SB 349/HG 401 that would eliminate the ability of local
107 government to determine the single-family zoning designation and allow multi-family housing in every
108 neighborhood with no minimum parking requirements, therefore encouraging uncontrolled development and added
109 stress and demand on the municipality's infrastructure. Manager Miller requested to write a similar resolution in
110 opposition and send it to our legislative delegation and the leadership of the North Carolina General Assembly. The
111 request to adopt the language in Pineville's resolution example and write **Resolution 2021-05**, and have it signed by
112 the Mayor was approved by a MOTION from Commissioner Barrow, seconded by Commissioner Overcash.
113 Unanimous vote: 5-0.

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115 Committee Reports: Parks and Recreation Minutes from March 9, 2021, Planning DRAFT Minutes from March 17,
116 2021. No questions.

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118 Commissioners Comments: Commissioner Barrow spoke with NCDOT traffic engineer Steve Hamilton does not
119 think he can reduce the speed on Hwy 55 from the Piglet to Straight Rd., however the district engineer did agree to
120 come and do a speed and car count to see if they could justify the speed reduction and/or discuss widening the road
121 to allow for bicycle lanes on both sides. NCDOT is still reviewing flooding on Hodges and Broad St.

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123 Mayor Pro Tempore White commented that he will not be able to attend the HWAC meeting but wanted the Board
124 to be aware of a new local legislative Bill granting new jurisdiction of our water, includes support for Oriental, New
125 Bern, Bridgeton, and Trent Woods.

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128 Next meetings scheduled: April 14, 2021 (BUDGET) May 5, 2021 8AM (BUDGET), June 1, 2021 Regular.

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131 Commissioner Simmons made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Barrow. Unanimous vote : 5-0.

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133 Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:14pm.

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140 Sally Belangia, Mayor

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140 Diane H. Miller, Town Manager/Clerk

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143 Approved _____, 2021