



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, May 7, 2024, 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
Mayor Sally Belangia officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental regular meeting was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 and was called to order at 6 PM.  
2 Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for the  
3 meeting were available through the Town's website at [www.TownofOriental.com](http://www.TownofOriental.com).

4  
5 Present: Mayor Belangia(SB), Mayor Pro Tempore Price (AP), Commissioner Overcash(CO), Commissioner  
6 Litzenberger(BL), Commissioner Roe(FR), and Commissioner Crosser(BC). Town Manager Diane Miller(DM),  
7 Administrative Director Tammy Cox, Officer Blayney, Attorney M. Scott Davis, and many members of the Public.  
8 Mayor starts with Pledge of Allegiance. Welcome, Scott Davis (SD), our attorney.

9  
10 Approval of Agenda: FR makes a MOTION to approve the agenda CO seconds. BC would like to add a discussion  
11 of the Engineering Contract after the Manager's Report. FR amends. :5-0.

12  
13 Public Comment: Mayor notes the first person talking And the second person are combining theirs, so Roger Huth,  
14 at 3021 Maritime Drive, gets six minutes, thanks to his wife Crystal.

15 6:04 Roger Huth-3021 Maritime: 4 Commissioners have given notice- what happened was a screwup. Please  
16 provide corrective action, not retaliatory actions. The Oriental employees gave their official resignation, now a third  
17 of the entire town staff has given notice. All this has happened just since the new board of commissioners was sworn  
18 in in December. When we, the people of Oriental, elect a commissioner, we entrust them with taking care of our  
19 towns, residents, and employees. We expect honesty, integrity, and transparency and accountability. As a certified  
20 fraud examiner with over 30 years of investigative experience, it is my view that the actions appear to have been in  
21 retaliation against Tammy Cox for refusing to allow circumvention of accounting and procurement policies. And it  
22 is these retaliatory actions that cause the resignation of two talented employees, putting this town at risk for  
23 regulatory fines and additional costs the town would not otherwise have incurred. To date, the financial liaison, no  
24 financial misconduct, which is consistent with the findings of other auditing work already performed. Met with  
25 Candy and Marsha who are concerned that we're going to hurt Croaker Fest and tourism somehow. It's pretty hard  
26 to connect these dots there. They tried to intimidate me for the next hour, even threatening to have me sued for  
27 asking questions of my elected official, which is my right as a resident of this town. Who would want to take a job  
28 here for less money than just about anywhere else in this state? Knowing that they have to work under these  
29 conditions. But at a minimum, this board has a responsibility to fix what is broken and keep this from happening  
30 again so this town can move forward. (condensed)

31  
32 6:08 Richard Lambert: Commissioner Overcash initiated a meeting back in October, a few weeks before the  
33 election, saying that our roads were such a major problem for us, and brought the town together. Kellenberger gave  
34 his third presentation on the conditions of our roads, and the consensus was some action was going to be taken.  
35 That was six months ago. Nothing has been done in the six months. And that's the reason why I'm here, that  
36 tomorrow when you go into the budget, that the initiative you took to get votes now gets translated into doing  
37 something, using budget to repair our roads for this coming year. Maybe a pothole or two.

38  
39 6:09 Judith Smith: I've lived here for over 20 years. Madam Mayor and Commissioner, this is my opinion. I neither  
40 support or oppose the R. V. Park rezoning, but I was disappointed that that letter that was mailed to you all was not  
41 read here.

42 But let me summarize what that letter said. Mr. Spratt states his rezoning request passed the Planning Board  
43 unanimously. Residents met at Pierce Creek with the Commissioner. Nothing wrong there. Many angry, highly  
44 agitated, ill informed residents attended the town meeting to oppose his proposal. His representative, the engineer,  
45 was told to sit by the deputy for her safety. The meeting goes out of control, with residents interrupting speakers at  
46 will to trash his proposal. All commissioners state, before there are any presentations, They would never approve the  
47 request. During the presentation, before, during the presentation, residents interrupted and hurled insults at the

48 engineer. Something's wrong here. And the board voted it down. But I see a pattern, okay? An issue comes up, a  
49 commissioner meets with residents, angry residents show up in meetings with misinformation and disinformation.  
50 For example. I read about angry residents complaining about staff cuts. So I went to the manager, I went to  
51 commissioners, and I asked them, What about these staff cuts? They didn't know anything about them. Who's  
52 spreading the rumors? They didn't know. Before the town meeting, a commissioner meets with residents. Nothing  
53 wrong there. At the next town meeting, people are angry about police cuts and water plant cuts. Hurling insults. That  
54 commissioners have been demanding a resignation. Something is wrong here. What staff cuts? No person with a job  
55 has been laid off. Voluntary resignations are not staff cuts. Financial liaison, same thing. Misinformation,  
56 disinformation. Liaison is bothering staff. While commissioners are prohibited from talking to staff. Not needed  
57 because of external audits. This one's in jail now. She went to jail in 2022. This one was booked in December of  
58 2023. And they, they, um, embezzled money in very much the same manner. Through credit cards, through payroll,  
59 and by altering bank statements. So I just want to say that I'm for the financial liaison position, and I'm against, uh,  
60 these people being whipped up.

61 6:12 Ann Rost: Hi, I'm Ann Rost. I live at 2115 White Farm Road. I was here at the meeting that my neighbor was  
62 just talking about. It seemed to me, as one of the people who had strong feelings that there was a lot of strong  
63 feelings there, but I didn't see this group of people or anybody out there do anything that I would think was anything  
64 other than express an opinion, so I think maybe there's not really anything very wrong.

65 Angie Propst: 6207 Mains Hill Point. And I too have been here for a long time. Been in business, out of business for  
66 a long time. Been on a lot of different committees. Volunteered as well as working. And first thing I want to say,  
67 Thank you all for standing up. This is a thankless job, I understand it. And my experience is the more diversity you  
68 have when you have people coming from different areas The better solutions you'll have. The worst, the worst thing  
69 you can have is everybody agree on everything without any discussion, without any oversight. Anyway, all for being  
70 here and let's all work together for the better of our town.

71  
72 Joann Reid: I would think you would say, well, thank you for that. I will look at this and take it under advisement  
73 and not get angry. I just went to a meeting yesterday and the same thing happened. Somebody asked for an  
74 evaluation or if they wanted the records of the budget to see where the expenses went.  
75 But there were no budget, there was no expenditure records, there was no evaluation of the monies or where the  
76 monies went. So it happens all the time. Anyway, thank you all for serving the town, but I just want to say as many  
77 people that you could find against, you could find many, many more on the other side, and I hope you can all look at  
78 this and be fair. Thank you.

79  
80 Consent Agenda: CO makes a MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda. FR seconds. 5-0.

81  
82 Manager's Report: Your financial report is attached and it's going to be on the next couple of slides if y'all are going  
83 to present it for me. The RFQ for engineering services, we did the interviews on the 4/22, I think Commissioner  
84 Crosser is going to discuss that further.

85 We still need new representatives for the flood mitigation update. Meetings over several months, one in each place,  
86 and this is where we are allowed to have input on flood mitigation measures that are then added to building code  
87 things that are specific to us.

88 There were optional menu items that we asked the county to put in and because we participated in all of these  
89 meetings, they took every single one of our suggestions and added those to the Pamlico County Plan.

90 So, if anybody's interested in doing this, it's probably an hour a month for a couple of months, four or five months.

91  
92 Anybody who's willing, we also do not have a replacement for Mrs. Khouri at the Bay River Metropolitan Sewer  
93 Board.

94  
95 We finally got our SAM registration fixed, so we were able to move forward again, filing the reimbursements for the  
96 Pierce Creek Dredge and getting ready for our state application 2023-134. Which was our five and a half million  
97 dollar water rehab project.

98

99 We are already monitoring storms off and on in the Atlantic. There was a hurricane expo by insurance professionals  
100 at Brantley's. We will be doing one here on May 22nd at 6. 00, and it will be NOAA/NWS will do a presentation on  
101 the newest info on hurricane season. It's open to anybody, even outside of town. The amateur radio folks are the  
102 ones that got this together.

103  
104 This week is the end of Demetrius's, employment with us. We've lost two public works guys since last month. Ads  
105 are out for public works and finance officer.

106  
107 Our next budget meeting is tomorrow morning at nine. It is open to the public.

108  
109 The North Carolina Coastal Federations will be using this room on June 11th for the whole day to conduct some  
110 training on their folks that are doing shrimp trawling research.

111  
112 We have a county leadership meeting. Generally it's the mayor and myself go from each of the towns in Pamlico  
113 County plus the county manager, plus the Eastern Carolina Council of Government and we talk about the things that  
114 we all are experiencing together. It was very productive. There are some things in the end of the manager's report  
115 package that you should probably take a look at. And there are two ordinance proposals from the County that are not  
116 quite ready for adoption.

117  
118 There is also information in that package about potential, um, increase in fire tax rates, and potential for a quarter of  
119 a cent sales tax increase.

120  
121 We got a notification last week that our project would be approved. We are a year and a half into this. Our project  
122 with the USDA to rehabilitate Hodges St. is to be funded, has been selected for funding. We're really at the very  
123 beginning,

124  
125 Our unit assistance list report, nine months budgets actual was filed. Our ARPA annual report was filed.

126  
127 Total general fund revenues. And you see budgeted year to date, and then last year's year to date in April.  
128 So, we're at 83 percent of the year, and our revenues are projected, are currently sitting at 62%. But, we don't get a  
129 twelfth of our revenue every month. We get a considerable chunk of it in the summer months. So, April, May, June,  
130 and then July gets backed in from June.

131  
132 We are behind, but we always catch up in the summer. Expenditures are running below average. Water fund is doing  
133 very well. We have had a couple issues at the water plant.

134  
135 And then, the bottom half of it is your checking accounts, where you see NCCMT, that is the North Carolina Capital  
136 Management Trust- that is money that we have put aside that makes higher yield. Commissioner Roe and I have  
137 gone back and forth about moving additional funding into North Carolina Capital Management Trust because it does  
138 make more money. My concern is that we're about to enter into at least one, if not two projects where we have to put  
139 the money out first and then get it back. So, we're going to have to do a little more diligence on how much we can  
140 let go. Plus, here we are expecting a bit of a hurricane season.

141 I always budget conservatively. That's the argument we have, and your central depository cash is at \$1, 067, 000.

142  
143 I wanted to personally thank Jennifer Pawlikowski with Sailcraft, who- this boat was abandoned at our dock with no  
144 way to get it out as Cahoon was coming in to repair the dock. I also need to thank Mr. Deaton who towed it from  
145 here to Sea Harbor. Sea Harbor and Jenny who stored it for us for two, three weeks. And then Mr. Deaton picked it  
146 up again at no cost to the town and took it over to Jennifer. Jennifer hauled it out. We contracted with a guy who  
147 disposes of boats. It cost us \$ 2, 700 to get rid of this boat. We really didn't have a choice with the repairs coming in.  
148 But now we're aware of, this is what it's going to cost. Plus we had a lot of goodwill on this one. So thanks to all of  
149 those who helped.

150  
151 We have a guest request. Fairfield Harbor Yacht Club is coming in the weekend of the 17th and 19th and they have  
152 one extremely large boat that isn't going to fit anywhere else, and has asked for simply the right side of Town Dock  
153 2, everything else, they're staying at Tom's Docks. We've done this several times in the past, AGREED.

154 Our audit contract was accepted by the L. G. C. and the North Carolina Treasurer's Office. I was contacted today by  
155 our auditor, who will be in on July 18th for her first pass, and will be giving us a list of the things that she wants to  
156 look at first.

157  
158 We are still looking at solutions to the tree in Lou Mac Park. Talking about possibly having most of it cut and  
159 having some of it carved, looking at what the estimates for that would be, the potential to cut it off and put tabletop  
160 on it, something like that. And the tap that stopped traffic on Broad Street cost us \$10,000.

161  
162 Added Item: Water Advisory Board- Engineering Contract: the Water Advisory Board has gone through a couple of  
163 sessions. We put out an RFQ for engineering firms for our project, the \$5. 3M drinking water rehabilitation project.  
164 We had two engineering firms respond. We had a session with both. Our group we went through Q& A, they filled  
165 out the questionnaire and then we had a Q& A interview. We, the board, had a unanimous support of one vendor  
166 that we'd like to recommend that we move forward to with negotiations and that's TRC. They understood our  
167 project, had project experience specific to pipes and streets and older, Maysville. They had solid project knowledge,  
168 experience and knowledge with Oriental. Plus, we all related very well with each other when we went through the  
169 interview. And we had full confidence in their expertise and their staffing. So we would recommend that we move  
170 forward with negotiations.

171 CO: makes a MOTION that we move forward with TRC. FR second. 5-0.

172  
173 We have an appointment request. Ms. Rost, who you heard from earlier today, would like to be appointed to the  
174 Board of Adjustment.

175 BL makes a MOTION to approve Ann Rost as the Board of Adjustment Appointee.

176 CO:second. 5-0.

177  
178 Next is the public hearing.

179 Planning board is moving forward and I request a set of public hearing date. So you currently do not have a meeting  
180 set in July. The holiday weekend, the Croaker Fest and all of that is the weekend after that. Your June meeting will  
181 be packed because it's going to have your budget, your ordinance, your fee schedule, all those things that we do in  
182 June. You might want to consider scheduling the public hearing for July.

183  
184 FR makes a MOTION to schedule Public Hearing for July 2 on GMO changes for 160D. BL seconds. 5-0. We could  
185 get a corrected version from the county for the building inspector part. Get the SUP process, all the things in there at  
186 once. AP: I'm not sold on the change of the SUP, but I'll be glad to listen. The 160D. Yes, sir. It's got an SUP  
187 process in it. It's not our current one.

188  
189 Well, we're going to compare the draft ordinance that we have, that we had to correct it, the SUP ordinance with  
190 what is sitting in the corrected 160 D version of our GMO. The problem is both of those are legal.

191 The process that we have in place now is legal. The process that we're talking about moving to is perfectly legal.  
192 Both of them are. So, it's a matter of which do you want. So we just need to make sure they match.

193 AP: my understanding the E. C. C. will come over here twice. They were here once and they're going to come one  
194 more time. Okay. This is going to be a big deal for the town. I would think we'd want to have them available when  
195 we have the public hearing, because people may ask questions that they could answer. That's just my thought. And  
196 I'm, I'm about a third away through reading and it's excellent. But it's not anything that we can argue about. This is  
197 making our ordinance legal. Right now, the parts of our ordinance conflicts with the newly enacted 160 D. This  
198 action to reset the GMO makes our ordinances compliant. Um, parts of 160 A were repealed and replaced into 160  
199 D. The final version of the 160D edits is in your package.

200  
201 Officer Blayney This is the community service project that I hinted at when we were in the budget meeting before,  
202 said that I thought that I did have enough in the budget to do it.

203 The idea is to have a projector screen that we can put on a movie, possibly twice a year for the citizens, at no cost to  
204 the citizens, at Lou Mac Park or another location.

205 But then we have to pay a company for the rights to show it. And if we do not, there's a substantial fine.

206 So we've already bought the projector. Now, what I was showing you with the projector is it actually comes with the  
207 projector, the screen, the cables, the DVD, Blu ray, streaming device with it. And the projector itself is a short  
208 throw, which means it will be less distance to the screen. This would be a move of the night out law enforcement  
209 night out or whatever. CO: We ran into the canine unit at the dog park the other day and I asked Nick to get with  
210 him and see about if it was available, then get with Parks and Rec and see if we wanted to put on another event.  
211

212 Tree at Lou Mac Park: Vicki Rasmussen: I'm the chair of the Oriental Parks and Recreation Committee. I met with  
213 John Deaton at the tree in Lou Mac that is scheduled to be removed. I concur with his conclusions, though I am not  
214 by any means an expert in the field.

215 I contacted the rest of the Parks and Recreation Committee members and informed them of the decision. And though  
216 we're all saddened by the fact that it must go, we're going to go with the expertise in the area. The committee would  
217 like to recommend at this time that a tree of similar growth potential be planted in its place.

218 Commissioner Litzenberger and I are advisors to the Harbor Waterfront. And the Harbor Waterfront Committee did  
219 a wonderful clean up. I'd like her to talk about it. Met at town dock two and they repainted the building there. They  
220 moved a sign. They painted the dock where the pump out is. They did a big cleanup on the jetty, which like they got  
221 tons of trash off of there. They're really making it their mission to kind of help out with public works since we're so  
222 down on staff. So, you know, I just really appreciate them stepping up to the plate and they are taking on a lot and  
223 it's just really means a lot to the town I think. Nethouse. Look gorgeous.  
224

225 AP: I guess, so I just wanted to let everybody know that we're having our budget meetings, which are open to the  
226 public, but like Diane said, there's no public comments, but it's really encouraged to come just so that you know  
227 what's going on with our, with your money and how we're spending it. So those are every Wednesday this month at  
228 9 a. m. here. Um They're pretty informal. The last one took an hour. So if you're interested in that, definitely show  
229 up.  
230

231 CO: it came up tonight, the roads, Commissioner Roe and I have been after this for a year or more. Trying to get  
232 paving done. We had actually got one of the paving companies from Jacksonville that paved River Dunes to come,  
233 look at all our roads, Commissioner Roe and myself, Allison, Manager Miller.  
234 finally I got a quote. And this is what's happened so far. 3. 1 million dollars. All of those. So I requested, since we  
235 had talked about using some of the capital reserve for this, maybe 250, 000.  
236 I got back with the representative and said, tell us what you can pay for 200, 000 to 250, 000. I have still not heard  
237 back through repeated requests. And he was the only one at that time we had we could get in touch with. We are  
238 actively trying to get our roads fixed. It's just hard and expensive to get anybody to do it.  
239 DM: I spoke to our Barnhill contact who did our paving, the last set of paving at the end of June last year- they were  
240 trying to check to see if they had any other projects in the area where we could maybe not have to pay the full  
241 mobilization cost because they weren't in the area.  
242

243 BC: Yes. I would like to thank Manager Miller and the staff for their support and assistance regarding the financial  
244 liaison. Very appreciative of your help and assistance.  
245 Working together, we have identified areas for improved internal controls, and I thank you for that. One of the  
246 area's best practices that we visited, Manager Miller and I, on this topic was a town credit card policy. Especially  
247 since we have new employees coming aboard, it would be good to have a policy set to provide guidance and  
248 guidelines on the proper use of a town's credit card. We have six plus town credit cards and a store account that  
249 we're managing. And that's quite a bit, and plus all of the gasoline for the vehicles is all paid for by credit cards. So  
250 we're working on that area. The second area is best practices for payroll. For six plus years, one person has been the  
251 single handed completed all payroll runs, even on vacation. Uh, we're working together going forward to get a  
252 transition plan where we have cross training and rotation for payroll. So when someone goes on vacation for payroll,  
253 they don't have to take their laptop with them to do payroll. And it's good rotation, best practices. The other areas,  
254 best practices, is bank reconciliation. We're working hard on that one. They're both, manager Miller and team, are  
255 working to get the bank reconciliations current and complete. The individual that's doing the bank reconciliation  
256 from the individual that does the general ledger reporting. So we've made some very solid steps forward.

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7:04PM The Board will go into closed session per North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11. (a)3 to consult with an attorney and for it to be retained by the public body in order to preserve an attorney client privilege between the attorney and the public body. Which privilege is hereby acknowledged. The public body in North Carolina. May consider and give instructions to an attorney concerning the handling of settlement of claims, judicial action, mediation, arbitration, and, or administrative procedures. FR: Makes the MOTION, BL seconds. 5-0.

7:36PM Return from Closed Session: FR:make a motion that we authorize the mayor to execute the legal service agreement discussed. BL seconds. 5-0.

CO makes a MOTION to adjourn. BL seconds. 5-0.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sally Belangia , Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diane H. Miller, Town  
Manager/Clerk

Approved , 2024



ORIENTAL ANNUAL BUDGET RETREAT  
Monday, May 20, 2024 4PM Budget Meeting #4  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating

6

7 The Town Board of Oriental Budget Meeting #3 was held on Wednesday, May 16, 2024.  
8 Mayor Belangia noted Mayor Pro Tempore Price was not present. Members of the Public, Manager Miller, and Dep  
9 Finance Officer Tammy Cox.

10  
11 Mayor Belangia calls the meeting to order at 4PM. Asks Manager to give the intro. Manager reads the email noting  
12 that we are being removed from the UAL early. Mayor and Manager met with UAL representative and answered all  
13 of her questions sufficiently. Boards past raised water rates to fix the depreciation issue and all our quarterly reports  
14 were acceptable.

15  
16 Schedule S. Schedule S has the changes that we had talked about at your last meeting. We talked about raising the  
17 higher rates, the higher tiers, so those who are using the more water would be more affected than those who are  
18 unable to or just don't. There is an asterisk in there for tapping under DOT roads. We changed the tampering fees to  
19 be relative to our new costs. Letter of compliance up to \$350 from \$300. That's for new construction over 200sqft.  
20 And then, minor and major, meaning, we can make the changes without having to go look at the proposed change,  
21 That still makes the minimum setbacks. But if we have to go out there, then it's a major change. And we've had a  
22 couple of those. We did remove a fingerprint fee- we don't do that- Sherriff does.

23  
24 That water collections proposed revenue is not as conservative as I usually am I think that \$279,000 numbers up to  
25 \$315,000 now. We've got another month to receive in.

26 In the General Fund Revenues, same thing, items in blue won't change. So, zoning and permit fees may change  
27 incrementally with raised rates.

28  
29 The general fund expenses. We made some adjustments to move a little bit. And line 52220,- admin assistant salary,  
30 FICA, admin retirement orbit, admin health dental. We know that that's kind of a squishy number because it depends  
31 on who's all going to be here. Last time you added text-my-gov.

32  
33 The general fund is subsidizing simply the green waste at this point. Alright, here's where the first set of bad news  
34 starts. We renew our trash/recycling contract this year and if we continue on it only goes up two percent as opposed  
35 to the seven percent everybody else is getting. So I jumped at that offer we will sign the two percent on tipping fees.

36  
37 Mowing- to align with our mowing Ordinance-Then it would be July, August, September. October.  
38 The middle one is the one that does the schoolhouse condos and all that. The lowest one is Miss Mary Ellen, who  
39 does a lot of lots in town. And then Garrett Neam is the highest one. They all have insurance.  
40 I would put a little extra in the budget because we've never done this and if you want something extra (for an event  
41 or something like that), we'll have a little bit of room for that contractor to do a little more work.

42  
43 The lot clearing. We've got an estimate of \$700 to clear it and an estimate of \$10,000 to fence it. However you  
44 want to do that or not. The clearing is in the 23-24 budget.

45 Your financial replacement. We interviewed two. One called this morning and said she could not take the lower rate  
46 because she was working in a different municipality and they were offering her \$70,000 in the new fiscal year for  
47 not doing remotely as much work as we would like.

48 And then we have a second one that is coming back for a second interview, who has more experience with more of  
49 the things that we're doing. On Wednesday, who also called and said she cannot make it work for less.

50 You also need to look at what you're paying Tammy to teach this person until the end of June.

51  
52 We're talking about the year that we're in. From the time that person comes on until the end of June .

53 And is there a probationary period attached with that new position- Ninety days. And is there any bonus upon  
54 completion? We usually do. And is that factored in? It is not. Okay. We usually add fifty cents, a dollar, something.

55 Yeah. Which would be \$1,990. Who would this person report? To Manager. And the finance director title comes  
56 off you. Then I would still be the clerk, the land use administrator, Town manager, police chief, planning director.  
57 And then we re-evaluate you after your 90 days and then we'll give new hires some kind of incremental raise at that  
58 time.

59  
60 The preferred candidate is running a fairly large, tense operation with a lot of departments. (BC) reservation is that  
61 a big jump from your initial 27, now we're up to 31. For the position itself. The position itself started out at 27 an  
62 hour and now it's jumped to 31. 25.

63 (DM) It appears that's what the market is because I can't get anybody. If that's the market, we've got to have  
64 somebody. One has already turned it down.

65  
66 DM: That was my intent from the beginning, because if Tammy had stayed, I would ask that she be made the  
67 Financial Director. We got a candidate now. Runs a private enterprise in New Bern. Four or five departments.  
68 Several different levels. Everything from maintenance to scheduling to scheduling maintenance to scheduling. She  
69 pays all the employees in these different departments. She runs payroll. She does accounts payable, accounts  
70 receivable.

71  
72 The only training this person will need is how our particular to our system. That's right. And fund accounting. Yeah.  
73 She's not in government but picks things up quickly, ask the right questions. 10 years she has been doing this. So  
74 she's not a newbie. Why would she want to leave this job at New Bern and come to work for us?  
75 She's used to a high pressure environment.

76  
77 And does our software company offer some kind of training as well? They will offer. We have had issues with it in  
78 the past. It's very limited. And it's, and it's expensive. They are not answering the questions we are asking.

79  
80 The county pays \$110,000. For the assistant county manager and the finance director. He was making \$78,000 as  
81 just the finance director for the county.

82 (FR) You guys are the knowledgeable people, but on the face of it, it sounds like a no brainer if we need to do it.

83  
84 Well, there's no question we need to hire somebody. I just want to make sure that the board is satisfied with the  
85 decision. (DM) There are nine finance director positions open east of I 95. So we are in competition with everybody  
86 who's missing a finance director. The things that we journal on a regular basis and you'll see it in Tammy's list of  
87 things that she's responsible for- She sets up those recurring journal entries so that you just have to change the date.  
88 This is where it's going to do, so both sides of the entry are there. It's, Change the number, change the date, and go  
89 on. So, a lot of it is set up as we change over the budget.

90  
91 (BC) I wish we had more candidates, but we're getting into a time crunch here.  
92 So we're rating that \$31.25, but then it's going to \$31.25 for the first 90 days and then \$31.75. And cross training is  
93 essential.

94  
95 As a group, we are moving away from residency requirements because the house prices and the ability to sell and  
96 move and all those things. Police chiefs were the first ones that were released from those residency requirements,  
97 but now it's starting to be managers and finance directors also.

98  
99 With the 4 percent increase, The salary of the manager, city clerk, planning director, land use administrator,  
100 enforcement officer goes to \$101,836 without merit. That's \$971 increase. I just don't see this as fair compensation  
101 \$103,000 is the weighted ten year average for Managers of small municipalities.

102  
103 Diane had an expense account that was made into a raise several years ago- \$3,600/year. FR: Just put it to \$103,000  
104 a year. So that it's up with the weighted average of the town manager, the state weighted averages. FR: Well, we had  
105 a shit year that makes her happy, let's do it.

106  
107 BL: So in my mind, I don't see it as like a raise essentially, I see it as like going up to what we should be paying a  
108 manager. Rather than giving a discount, like we have been for the last couple years.

109

110 Bonus tied to the Management Objectives. The offer was for a 4% COLA and a 5% (5,000) bonus --- not merit for  
111 the Town Manager. The Staff preferred the raise (payment now) to merit bonus (one lump payment). The Town  
112 Manager elected not to receive a 5% bonus tied to Management objectives, since staff was not receiving the same.  
113 The merit for employees discussion was documented in the previous minutes.

114  
115 BL: Yeah, and I think if Diane quits tomorrow, we're going to end up paying her 20, 000 to be in her same position.  
116 To get somebody to work and do Diane's job. I mean, that's what the average that she gave us of the towns that are  
117 similar to us, the average male makes 143, 825 a year. The average female makes 125, 282 a year. I mean, based on  
118 the towns that are similar to us. Even if you compare her to the females, she's making a lot less.  
119 Based on 5 percent raise, you go to 103,793.

120  
121 Okay. Let's take a five minute break.

122  
123 June meeting. Closed session. For the goal achievement objectives. FR: If we're doing away with merit, I think it's  
124 wrong. Today we do Manager's compensation. But for the last year, the bonus, we go into Closed Session.

125 BL: mean, how do you feel about the raise to 103, 000 but then no merit bonus? Does that make you feel shitty?

126 DM: It is what it is. I'm not trying to bankrupt the town. \$49.90 takes manager to \$103,793.

127 I have no problem with management objectives. I guess we do it and not tie it. Just have it a part of the review  
128 process. But it's not tied to any bonus or anything?

129  
130 DM: Because I get these six, seven great objectives, that yes, these are the things we want to hit. And on July 2nd,  
131 that list changed. And it changes constantly. And when half the staff leaves and three million dollar granted projects  
132 at the same time with eight people. It's go get a million dollar grant and make it happen. Yes, exceeded.

133 FR: I mean, if you look, what are, what were her objectives last year? Read them out to us. They're public records?  
134 Yeah, they're public records.

135  
136 So, one of the things was roads, right? Okay. So, I went and got an estimate. And tried to spend all of the money that  
137 you gave me to fix roads. The estimate came in at the number you gave me. The actual cost was almost a hundred  
138 thousand dollars less, which unfortunately means we could have got a hundred thousand dollars more road paving,  
139 but they won't do that on the fly. So I did \$200,000 and some worth of paving where we could have had \$300,000  
140 So I was just as frustrated with that as you are. And we threw some more money in it.

141  
142 CO: Paving is a concern. Managers should develop a plan that best uses the budgeted paving money and keeping the  
143 town board informed of progress.

144 She did. Continue to use the budget amounts for drainage in ways that best handle the water flow issues in town. She  
145 did that. Look for grants, state funds, resources, private entities that the town could use to alleviate paving drainage  
146 and structural issues. She did that. That's it. I don't see where those are unreasonable. And she did it. They are not  
147 unreasonable. But she's saying that things changed right after this and more stuff got put on the plate. So much more  
148 stuff.

149  
150 So what would be your ideal situation then, compensation, in your dream world?

151  
152 I just want a staff that's able to cover what, what we need to get done and serve the citizens as best we can. FR: 103.  
153 If that makes her happy, then screw it. We've had a bad year, let's go home. And we'll talk about I'm all for  
154 managing objectives. This is what we wanted to do, but we can't do that. And we can talk about that at the meeting.

155  
156 Can I see the general fund expenses. Just general fund and I updated the FICA and I updated the orbits.  
157 General fund, let's see what's at the bottom. You have \$54, 218 that you can add to your paving. You can, instead of  
158 funding the contracted finance out of general fund appropriated, you can pay for that. However you want to do that.

159  
160 DM: We're going to move the \$4,000 that we got for the Charger into the police capital reserve when we fix the  
161 capital reserve. That's one of the things you'll see in June.

162

163 Paving or drainage? Tammy, is the revenue number right? I put 75 percent paving, 25 percent drainage. Yeah, and  
164 it's not restricted, right? No. I like that. Where do you want it? They want to put 75 to roads and 25 to drainage. It's  
165 not restricted so we can move it.

166  
167 DM: If you put it to roads, you're putting it in a restricted fund. Once you put it in there, you cannot remove it.  
168 Drainage? You can put it in drainage. What we have done in the past is put it in storm preparedness. That way if it  
169 doesn't get used, you can use it for whatever, because it's not a restricted fund.

170  
171 But we need to communicate to our residents that we have allocated out of this budget money for drainage and  
172 roads. We've got to do that. \$54,218 and split it between drainage and contractor.

173  
174 Can we agree on this budget? Is there anything you cannot live with?

175 No, I can live with the budget. We're making a major change in this town by outsourcing mowing and meter  
176 reading. I recognize that as a risk. It's a risk and it's going to put stress on our staff because we've never outsourced  
177 meter reading in only eight years.

178  
179 Something could go wrong with that, and I, I believe that we're going to have to work through it. I believe  
180 outsourcing mowing, we're used to being able to say, you go mow this today, we're going to lose some of that, and I  
181 compliment, you, The manager and the staff, let's you know, see how it goes, because I recognize this is a major  
182 change.

183  
184 I thank the other commissioners for supporting this. I think it's the right way to go. But it's a big deal. And we've got  
185 to be cognizant it's a big deal. Well, a big deal with a big changeover and staff at the same time. It might not  
186 necessarily be the worst timing for a big change.

187  
188 I can live with this budget. We're still going to be mowing town hall and Net House too. And a small boat ramp. So  
189 can we make it real clear? So we can communicate in the room so we all can raise our hand and we all can vote. I  
190 support this budget. Do you know this has been two years. Since we've done this, I would like a picture. It's got to be  
191 the zero. Congratulations. Thank you.

192  
193 **MOTION** to Adjourn Unanimous vote: 5-0.

194  
195  
196 \_\_\_\_\_  
197 Sally Belangia, Mayor  
Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diane H. Miller, Town Manager/Clerk

, 2024 \_\_\_\_\_



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
Mayor Sally Belangia officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental regular meeting was held on Tuesday, June 4, 2024 and was called to order at 6 PM.  
2 Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for the  
3 meeting were available through the Town's website at [www.TownofOriental.com](http://www.TownofOriental.com).

4  
5 Present: Mayor Belangia(SB), Mayor Pro Tempore Price (AP), Commissioner Overcash(CO), Commissioner  
6 Litzenberger(BL), Commissioner Roe(FR), and Commissioner Crosser(BC). Town Manager Diane Miller(DM),  
7 Administrative Director Tammy Cox, Dep Finance Officer Lisa Millington, Officer Wichrowski, and many  
8 members of the Public.

9 Mayor starts with Pledge of Allegiance.

10 Manager introduces Lisa Millington and she's starting with us as Deputy Finance Officer.

11 CO: makes the MOTION that we approve the agenda. Manager requests to add agreement with NCLM to approve  
12 signing up for dental/eye insurance. FR: Commissioner Litzenberger and I went to the county meeting last night and  
13 I'd like to add the agenda to have a brief report from the two of us at 4.5 Also, add 4.6 to the agenda to set two  
14 meetings. Discuss that in two meetings, one in a meeting on a workshop on town rules. 4.7 we need to reinsert the  
15 agenda meeting. CO amends motion to include all. FR: seconds. 5-0

16 Mayor takes a few minutes to make clear the procedures during meetings: We all need to be civil to each other. The  
17 board, the staff, and the citizens. All comments are to be directed to the whole board. Not an individual. Personal  
18 contact with individual commissioners and mayor can be done through our website. We have our cell phone  
19 numbers and our emails. So please contact us by either. The town manager is also available. She can be reached  
20 almost any day in her office. So if you want some answers specific, just contact us. Also, all public comment is at  
21 public comment period only. There's no back and forth during the meeting. We only read emails or letters at public  
22 hearings. There be no arguing during closed session or after this meeting is adjourned. I've got to read one other  
23 thing, because I went to a woman's club meeting today and it was sitting on the table. Be civil, be courteous, be  
24 honest, be polite. And I thought, wow, I got to borrow that for tonight. Each speaker is asked to limit comments to  
25 three minutes. Please wait to be recognized by the mayor prior to speaking. Direct comment to the full board, not to  
26 an individual board member or staff member. Although the board is interested in hearing your concerns, Speakers  
27 should not expect board action or deliberation on subject matter brought up during the public comment segment.  
28 Topics requiring further investigation will be referred to the appropriate town officials or staff and may be scheduled  
29 for future agendas. Alright, let's get started.

30 6:09 Angie Propst, 6207 Mainsail: on behalf of the Pamlico Arts Council. Executive Director not present. However,  
31 we applied for a permit to use the building that used to be the Chevrolet dealership building. I haven't seen the  
32 paperwork, but it says we're in non compliance, we have to have all these parking spaces to be able to use it. That  
33 building was built prior to the GMO, and it refers to that in your GMO, that that's exempt. The planning board  
34 should not have to do it. But, I'm appealing to this board.

35 6:10 Greg Bohmert, 311 Midyette Street. I just wanted to point out some similarities between a small business  
36 enterprise and a small town government. There's a lot in common. One is the retaining of qualified personnel. When  
37 they reach the level of a journeyman, they're often stolen from me by enterprises that can just flat out pay them more  
38 than me. There's just no two ways about it. And I think the town- the recent loss in personnel mirrors that. Because a  
39 lot of people, hardworking as they may be, come to the town and they improve themselves. Due to our size, your  
40 best employees are probably going to get stolen from you. I'm surprised that you did such a good job without really  
41 raising taxes.

42 6:12 Jim Fenton So I authored the actual intent document that was submitted with the Art permit application.  
43 Currently there's only three legal parking spaces there, two of which would fit handicap requirements. GMO  
44 suggests using satellite parking, which we've already explored with several different neighboring businesses, and  
45 they've told us that we can do.

46 6:14 Risa Danaan 452 China Grove Rd. Again I'm here to represent Art Gallery as part of the Pamlico Arts  
47 Association. It's going to be an art gallery exhibition space. It will be open to the public for display and participant  
48 report. Use the areas for, of course, a working studio and exhibition, workshop, classes, and lectures.

49 6:16-Deborah Khoury, 6054 Dolphin Road. I wish to speak in support of your decision to add a financial liaison to  
50 your Board structure. Since the board has a responsibility to set internal controls, assigning a person with knowledge  
51 and professional background in accounting to the position is a wise decision. Around 2011, BRMSD hired a woman  
52 with years of experience in accounting. Our superintendent often praised her commitment and contribution to the  
53 district and the board felt the same. She worked well with our auditors and our annual audits showed no material  
54 issues. But there was always one footnote concerning the fact that she was the only person doing the computer input  
55 for our financial record keeping. We were, that was on the audit, and the auditors told us that this was not unusual  
56 for a small district such as ours. The board agreed that it would be unnecessarily expensive to hire another employee  
57 with this level of software expertise in order to avoid that seemingly common footnote. Three years ago, our  
58 auditing firm notified us they had discovered financial irregularities. The employee had manipulated the financial  
59 software and over approximately 10 years of her employment had embezzled over half a million dollars.

60 6:20-Vicki Rasmussen 306 Mildred: I'm the chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee and a voting resident  
61 of Oriental, and I'm here to try to give clarity and understanding to the obvious confusion concerning Commissioner  
62 Crosser. September 2023, Bonnie Crosser purchases mums from Rachel's Nursery, drops the receipt off at Town  
63 Hall, and no one ever considered it to be unacceptable, even though she was no longer the chairman of the  
64 committee. She was working with me and helping me to get things done. The persecution began once she was  
65 elected, and before she was even sworn in. November 2023, Bonnie Crosser was elected and is now Commissioner  
66 elect. She does not stop serving the community, nor does she stop serving the Parks and Rec Committee. She's in  
67 New Bern on personal errands, runs into Lowe's and sees, oh, they have pansies. She did not want to drive all the  
68 way back to Oriental to get the credit card that belongs to the town because she doesn't get reimbursed for gas. She  
69 uses her personal credit card and she also uses her personal military discount. The cost to the town for the pansies  
70 would have been a mere 87 cents less if she had purchased them with the town credit card. The comment that the  
71 town loses sales tax when a third party makes purchases on their personal credit card. is a bit over the top.  
72 Commissioner Elect Crosser was not some third party. The comment that she should have checked how much  
73 money was in the GL prior to making a purchase is a bit over the top. As she did check the GL, she was well aware  
74 that we had over \$8,000 in the account, enough to cover. This incident could have been handled with a phone call to  
75 me when the receipt was turned in. Instead, the situation became a weapon for the purpose of unseating  
76 Commissioner Crosser, which would result in nullifying my vote and effectively silencing my voice in this town  
77 government. So I very respectfully ask you to put an end to the persecution, the harassment, the bullying, and the  
78 disrespect that has been directed at Commissioner Crosser.

79 Butch Rasmussen: declines to speak.

80 6:24 Larry Kleiner 6044 Dolphin Road But I want to speak in support of Bonnie personally. And so I am the  
81 coordinator of Pickleball. And I represent, although I may not speak for, 300 people, who are on our listserv. She's  
82 taken the lead in her abilities to try to expand her pickleball activities here, by getting the courts done for downtown  
83 Lupton Park, and has taken on the yeoman's job of trying to create a whole new venue for us, which will expand our  
84 reach all the way to our Surf City, and up to New Bern. I don't think there were any issues from our side at all. We're  
85 the ones that did all the fundraising for that. And Bonnie was just a vehicle to be able to get the money into the  
86 proper hands. From our side, there was no controversy. I've had meetings with Bonnie, and she runs an excellent  
87 meeting, good agendas, delegation, responsibility, but takes responsibility.

88 6:26 Ken Reed, 1100, Neuse Drive. I need to just reinforce what Larry just said about the pickleball. Because I'm  
89 the person that asked all of our pickleball players to donate \$25 a piece towards getting the courts re striped. But as  
90 it turned out, we outsourced the painting of the courts, which was a very good idea, because now they're filled in all  
91 the cracks, and the courts are much safer. But when the price doubled, I had to go back to our group of players and  
92 ask them for another \$25, which they graciously did. But, if there was a delay in the check getting to the town, it was  
93 because I delayed it, because I had to collect the money from the rest of the team, when the price doubled. And then,  
94 when that all took place, gave Bonnie the check. Simple as that. And we appreciate y'all approving that. Thank you.  
95 Thank you.

96  
97 6:28 Dan Foreman, 105 Gull Circle. I'd just like to thank Larry and Ken for the pickleball. I mean, it's great. I'm new  
98 at pickleball, and it's, it's a number one sport. It's coming up, and it's great.  
99

100 Mayor Belangia: Martin Spratt wanted his letter read last May. We read them at the public hearings, but I did make  
101 a copy. And y'all can share it.  
102

103 Consent Agenda: FR: item number two, the financial contract needs to be moved to the regular agenda because there  
104 are two questions I would like to discuss with you. So, I amend my motion. I amend the motion to move finance  
105 contract of the consent agenda to 4.7 BC seconds. 5-0.  
106

107 Manager's report.

108 Bill Marlowe and Bill Kepp have volunteered as representatives for flood mitigation. Anne Rost also volunteers.  
109 Your financial monthly report. It doesn't look great. It doesn't look terrible in this economy. We're at our collection  
110 on property tax. We're a little behind on sales tax, but we're going into the heaviest part of the year where we collect  
111 May, June, July. Back in from July, so we're either going to make it or we're going to come really close.  
112 FR: The county thinks they're going to miss it. They don't see it getting better.

113 Your expenditures which are mostly below what it has cost us. Public Works (Water) is a little bit up when you go  
114 to the revenues versus expenses, and that was because of the salt break, having to contract the ORC more  
115 importantly.

116 We had to do a contracted long tap under NCDOT road, So that's a little closer than we would like it to be on a  
117 normal basis, but this was not a normal year. So those are the numbers for water. The numbers on the bottom are,  
118 are our invested funds and our totals.  
119

120 So your fund balance and general fund is a \$1,015,243.71. And we also are due \$200,000 from the reimbursement  
121 from Pierce Creek.  
122

123 We'll have that before the end of the year. And we may even be at the end of the road with the reimbursement from  
124 FEMA. We'll be fighting that fight for five years.  
125

126 Here is our happy news. **We are off the Unit Assistance List.** We had to send the LGC budget to actual every three  
127 months for a year and a half- we came off the list early. Our audit team made sure our audit was done on time,  
128 everything was good. They had a lot of questions the very first time that I sent it. And then, no questions in  
129 succeeding reports. Our budget to actual was good. Not necessarily this board, but the previous board raised the  
130 water rates minimally and, and at the least for the highest tiers two years in a row, so that we were able to fix the  
131 depreciation issue in the water fund and get it to where it is recovering its cost.

132 All we have yet to do is approve a budget, sign it, send it to them, and we are done.

133 Janice Cox is resigning from the Board of Adjustments. So we, we need somebody new on the Board of adjustment.  
134 We got an additional \$82,500 in our five and a half million dollar project.

135 And so the state has reduced that percentage from 3 percent to 1.5 percent So they will get 1.5 percent and we'll get  
136 \$82,000 back. I don't start anything until we have an executed contract with the state and we don't have that contract.

137 We did Hurricane Prep, May 22nd. We have the packages both online and in Town Hall if you need them.

138 We're working on interviews for Public Works.

139 FEMA has instituted a new recommended heat advisory plan. I will get that together and have that as part of our all  
140 hazards response. We have contracted the clearing of that lot that is behind the water plant.

141 The new copier is in place. It's just the brush hiding and then we're going to have to figure out who we need to come  
142 in and get the trees. But we're making progress.

143 You will have a budget amendment June 27th. That's our let's get it all in line before the end of the year budget  
144 amendment. That will be the only piece of business on your agenda on June 27th.  
145 That's Tammy's last day with us. So, well, it's our next to last day. So we're going to all say goodbye to Tammy that  
146 night. July 1st she becomes a contractor, so Lisa will be the Deputy Finance Director, and Tammy will be the  
147 Financial Transition Assistance contractor  
148 June 28th, we will be closed. This building will be closed so that we can close out the previous year and bring in the  
149 books for the new year.

150  
151 There was an application from Point Pride to reinstate an outfall. People are welcome to comment on that. It was an  
152 old permit that's just asking to be re-certified.

153  
154 In the closed session at the last meeting, the legal agreement was with a group of attorneys that will be representing  
155 several municipalities and counties in the area in a PFAS settlement. And PFAS is that forever chemical that you  
156 hear about, it's actually down in Wilmington. So, our wells were tested, and they both came back good.  
157 And, but we have signed on to this in case something happens in the future. It was recommended by our attorney  
158 and there was no downside to it for us. So we have joined that group that is in the, the settlement in case something  
159 happens in the future. And they will pay for that well testing that we had done. That was the legal agreement.

160  
161 Late additions covered- Project updates- defers to Commissioner Crosser.

162 BC: This is regarding the water system rehab, the \$5.5M that went to \$5.3M. That's now \$5,382,000. We've selected  
163 a design, an engineering firm. TRC is the name. You'll see it come up with contracts in the consent agenda. Had a  
164 very good kickoff meeting with them. We couldn't ask for a better team. They've got the expertise. So hopefully as  
165 soon as we get that contract done, we'll begin the initial review, which will be taking the maps and looking at what  
166 we have and trying to help us prioritize what really needs to get fixed now, what we kind of want to get fixed, and  
167 maybe what can wait. And they're thinking three months.

168  
169 So, our contract went back and forth between our attorneys and their attorneys, and I did not get the final version  
170 until four o'clock today. Things got scratched and things got added.

171  
172 Now we're in the budget. The annual budget for 24-25, totals shown on screen. Expenditures and revenues. You  
173 have a capital reserve that has been revised since you probably last saw it. And it accounts for us not putting  
174 anything in the capital reserve this year. Moving all of those purchases out one year. And it also accounts for  
175 depositing the sale money from the Charger into Police Reserve at the end of this fiscal year, 23- 24.

176  
177 The other thing you have the fee schedule is not-going to pull up the summary of the fee schedule, Changes to the  
178 Chapter S schedule. The board deliberated diligently to try to make this- a those who use more will pay more, those  
179 who use less will pay less, but covering the town's costs for things.

180 The upper tiers of water are going up, 35 cents for 5,001 gallons and over.

181 Commercial over 25,000 gallons is going up a dollar per 1, 000 gallons.

182  
183 If we're going across the DOT road, it will be our normal fee plus whatever DOT taps onto it.

184  
185 Tampering fees are going up because the cost of those parts are going up.

186 We use staff to do many of the repairs, so those are the only things that the board has looked at that are going to go  
187 up.

188 The letter of compliance at 200 plus square feet will go from \$300 to \$350.

189 And that's a matter of what it takes us to send people out and look at your driveway drawings. And make sure that  
190 it's in the right place and that you're not trying to lay it right away over the top of a balcony or things like that.

191 We took off the fingerprinting fee. We don't do that. They do that at the county.

192  
193 And then clarified the difference between a minor change and a major change to a permit application.

194 So it does cost us to send somebody out there.

195 A major change would be something we have to go out to the parcel to look at the change and make sure it's still  
196 within rules because the plan is now different.

197 A minor change is something, for example, on the back side of the house that's moving from one side to the other-  
198 not affecting any setbacks or right-of-way, or I'm adding shed. We just redo the numbers.  
199

200 Bay River, we have no control over Bay River, but they are going up \$2 on their flat fee. So instead of it being 24  
201 and you get the first 2,000 gallons included, it will be \$26 with the first 1500 gallons.  
202

203 This is our holiday schedule. We didn't add anything, we didn't take anything away. It's just different days of the  
204 week, depending on where they fall. July 4th is on Thursday, as you see. So, this is your meeting schedule.  
205 You should know that none of your volunteer boards choose to change any of their meeting schedules.  
206 If you would like any changes, now would be the time for re publish.  
207

208 BL: makes a MOTION to change our August meeting to the 13th. FR seconds. 5-0.  
209

210 September Quarterly meeting can be for rules discussion.  
211

212 Agenda meetings : FR: originally against it, but might be a good thing. So this is once a month, usually Thursday  
213 before the Tuesday? (Discussion about timing of getting out information ahead of the meeting.)  
214 AP: Two of us remember we had the week before meeting. It lasted about five minutes. It didn't last a long time.  
215 Sometimes it did, sometimes it didn't. We should try it and see how it goes.  
216

217 Our meeting on July the 2nd. Yes. It's my understanding we're going to look at 160 D. It will be posted in the next  
218 two weeks for you to look at the whole, all of the corrections- all the 160D corrections, So, you can't not do 160 D  
219 corrections, but anything else, any clarifications.  
220

221 Well, I'd say have the gentleman here and let him give his explanations again, wherever we stand.  
222 And then we can either decide right then or talk among ourselves if we have any more problems.  
223 He answered every question. And the people that are interested can come and hear him, and then have the public  
224 hearing right after. We're going to schedule a public hearing, but just before it, Carlton will give his explanation.  
225 So that means we will be inserting some meetings.? The Tuesday before the Tuesday.  
226

227 November 5th is the one that I left on there in red. That's Election Day. We have done three different things. We  
228 have moved it to the next week. Wednesday, the 6<sup>th</sup> (consensus).  
229

230 Commissioner Roe and Commissioner Litzenberger wants to do the, about the discussion.  
231

232 BL: Okay. This is a report on the county meeting that Commissioner Roe and I attended last night and also just in  
233 regards to our budget. So this budget that we're talking about took seven meetings and countless changes by our  
234 town manager to come to a consensus. As Commissioner Roe pointed out, at the end of our last meeting, each one of  
235 us got a little bit of something we wanted, not everything.  
236 We compromised and we also took the current economic climate and employment challenges to heart, listened to  
237 staff and their needs, and came out with a balanced budget. At last night's County Commissioners meeting, County  
238 Manager Tim Buck laid out their budget and highlighted that they were looking to raise salaries by \$330,000.  
239 And that amount would still not address some of the vacancies they are trying to fill. So we arrived at our salary  
240 numbers and our increases by looking at the county, neighboring similar towns, and the U. S. Census data for  
241 eastern North Carolina.  
242 If we are to acquire and keep good staff, we have to be competitive.  
243 We came to these decisions as a board and I stand behind the salary increases we agreed to. At the county meeting,  
244 Tim Buck did essentially what Diane just did. They raised their salaries 3.5 percent. Okay, we raised, the lowest  
245 amount we raised our salaries was four and a little fraction percent.  
246 And I will say that Commissioner Litzenberger and I are on the same page on this particular subject and have been  
247 the whole time.  
248 The county is doing away with their green waste dumpster. They're eliminating them and that's saving them. They,  
249 they don't do the same way we do. But that's saving them \$100,000 a year. So the county green waste dumpsters are  
250 gone. You're going to have to go to NC Hwy 306.

251 They increase their water rate. We are chasing them. I have been an advocate and have had support for several years.  
252 We got to charge what the county does. Well, we charge a little more. The county's changing their rate again. So that  
253 gap, we're they're raising their water rates. But the worst thing, to me, is they are dipping in \$1.9 million dollars into  
254 their fund balance. They have a fund balance of about \$8 million, they're spending \$2 million of it because they can't  
255 balance their budget.

256  
257 But the big problem is the new school, and taxes with the new school. There's a lot to do with the school. And they,  
258 the school board people did not get everything they asked for, even after going in \$1.9 million unbalanced budget.  
259 So they're facing exactly what we are facing down the road.

260  
261 That costs are going out the roof and revenues are flattish and, and they put off raising taxes. We are not having to,  
262 to balance our budget, make any significant tap on our fund balance. The other thing I want to say, and I was saving  
263 this, but I want to show you, cause I'm not ashamed of this, you know, and I get a lot of pushback.  
264 This is what we pay our people. This is how much money we pay them. Now this is not their insurance and 401k.  
265 This is what we pay them. And I'm not ashamed that we pay our people. And I vote for this and I support it. So,  
266 come, please, next November, vote me out. But, you know, we've got to pay these people a living wage.

267  
268 You gotta look at the job. I'm not ashamed of what we pay our people. I'm not ashamed of what we pay our town  
269 manager. And anybody that says that is wrong. You can go to Bucee's and make 15 an hour to walk in Bucee's the  
270 first day.

271  
272 And then, then we've got benefits and that, that all adds up to that number. And Bonnie beat me up because this is  
273 whatever Tammy's new title is, it costs, and this is what the county doing Drew's job costs. These really aren't  
274 salaries.

275 But that all adds up to that number. And these are the benefits. I think Breena and I are on the same page. Now, we'll  
276 probably have a big battle next time. So, if you think we can't work together, you're wrong. I think we did a good job  
277 this time. In that state, it was unanimous. We want good people.

278  
279 FR: Finance contract: Okay, I tried to contact our lawyer, he's in Europe, but I have a couple concerns.  
280 If Tammy has moved away, she, she doesn't live here anymore, and we need her here, there's no provision to pay her  
281 any expenses, and I think we need a provision if we need her. To say that we'll pay, that the manager can authorize  
282 expenses. Because it's not going to be right.

283  
284 I think we need to pay reasonable expenses. That needs to be in the contract.  
285 Second, and this is a question. And I want to make sure you understand, I don't have any question about Tammy  
286 Cox's integrity. I'm asking a question, does she need to be bonded?  
287 Manager notes that the Manager is your official Finance Officer and she is bonded and responsible. Manager would  
288 like to hold off naming Lisa, finance officer, so that we don't have to transfer that bond until I'm sure she has her feet  
289 under her.

290  
291 Tammy doesn't have to be bonded. And the final question who approves her time? Manager- with Payroll.  
292 This contract to be approved as amended.

293  
294 FR: I move, we approve the contract as amended. BC seconds. Any discussion? 5-0.

295  
296 CO makes a MOTION we open the public hearing. FR seconds. 5-0.

297 Mayor notes one person, David White, 100 Gull Circle. Reserve. We had a public hearing, you know, back in  
298 September, October. About some good examples of what we might do to get funding for roads. I don't think  
299 anything's been followed up on that. When Hurricane Florence hit us, it cost the town \$795, 000. We had to come up  
300 with that fund first. FEMA reimburses it. If Florence costs us 795, 000, With the inflation, the next hurricane, if we  
301 get hit with something, it's going to cost us over a million dollars. And there were three or four towns in this area  
302 that never got reimbursed for their FEMA expense because they couldn't come up with the money up front. NOAA  
303 has now said we're going to get between 17 and 23 storms. Eight to 13 of them are going to be hurricanes. Four to  
304 seven are going to be major. I did look at the wording that your town manager put in to the executive overview. And  
305 she's asking you, and I would say that please do not take any money out of the reserve fund or the general fund

306 before the end of hurricane season. And then I ask you to reconsider after that to hold a meeting about ways you can  
307 fund it. Because taking \$250,000 out, you can't put 250 back in to build a reserve fund up. It'll take you five years to  
308 pull that back into that.

309  
310 Ann Rost: 2115 White Farm Road. I think all you guys are doing a heck of a job. I think at some point, we're going  
311 to have to raise taxes. Speaking as one of the people who's not going to enjoy that process, I think we're going to  
312 have to do it. Don't be scared of it.

313  
314 CO makes a MOTION that we close the public hearing. FR seconds. 5-0.

315 CO: I move we accept the budget as proposed with the amendments. FR: second. 5-0.

316  
317 FR: Listening to David, he raises excellent points. We need to look again at how we can fund road. Have we turned  
318 over every rock? Is there something now we're off his list? Could we do a bond? You know, I think we need to look  
319 at it. I'm still for the budget, but I'm absolutely open to getting a group of citizens together.  
320 You know, let's, let's look at it again. And we need to do something, but let's look one more time. We can fund it  
321 some other way. David makes excellent points.

322  
323 CO: I can't argue with that thought here. I'll ask Commissioner Crosser. As financial liaison, can you, is it  
324 something you would do to explore a bond and the ins and outs of how to do that? I could, I would need to be  
325 working with the town manager regarding it and our attorney.

326  
327 FR: Is there a bond, is it a possibility something we could do? DM: Absolutely.

328 FR: that we're all I know we talked about upfront money and all that before. DM: it's not so much us, we have to  
329 hire somebody else to do it. We're not allowed to do it.

330  
331 Commissioner Litzenberger: So, we actually did put money into roads, though. In this budget, it was in the last  
332 meeting- I think it was \$36,000. And then we did an additional amount into storm prep, so that it wasn't, put directly  
333 to roads. We could take it out and put it into drainage if we needed to. So we did fund roads, through this budget. It  
334 was my idea to take money out of the general fund after January, as a possible solution. But that would be something  
335 that we would do later down the line as a budget amendment.

336  
337 DM: You can't drain your own accounts first and then go to bond. You have to have your reserves pretty healthy for  
338 them to grant you funds.

339  
340 Police report. Officer Wichrowski

341 The month of May, we had three major events, the Townwide Yard Sale, Memorial Day, Extended Weekend. We  
342 had sort of large influx of people into the town.

343  
344 Auxiliary board report. They're attached, but is there someone off of one of the boards that wanted to say anything  
345 tonight? I don't have my contacts in, so I can't see you.

346 The Water Advisory Board's last set of minutes is up there also.

347  
348 Jim Blackerby, head of Harbor Waterfront called me and said that I should ask you if there's a possibility from, the  
349 Coastal Foundation to get some money to pay for the ADV removal. So we have sent them pictures and an email  
350 trail and all the things, who all participated, what it cost us, who we paid it to, all of that. So we may get reimbursed  
351 the \$2700, a lot of it was done on the graciousness of our residents.

352  
353 Commissioner Comments

354 **AP:** Make a motion to go into closed session for personnel matters according to North Carolina General Statute 143  
355 318. That's 11 (A) (6) BL:Second. 5-0.

356 DM reminds the room that the recorder was still on.

357  
358 We're back from closed session and there's something else we'd like to do before we.

359 BL: I'd like to make a MOTION to change the street parking at Broad Street. Um, change the ordinance to allow  
360 street parking at 800 Broad Street. BC: second. Motion second. 5-0

361 FR makes a MOTION to adjourn. BL: second.  
362 Mayor announces that on June the 27th we are going to have refreshments here for Tammy. So we're going to party  
363 after that meeting.

364  
365  
366  
367

368 \_\_\_\_\_  
Sally Belangia , Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_   
Diane H. Miller, Town  
Manager/Clerk

369  
370  
371 Approved , 2024



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, July 2, 2024, 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
Mayor Sally Belangia officiating

1 The Town Board of Oriental regular meeting was held on Tuesday, July 2, 2024 and was called to order at 6 PM.  
2 Mayor Belangia determined a quorum to be present. The meeting was open to the public. All documents for the  
3 meeting were available through the Town's website at [www.TownofOriental.com](http://www.TownofOriental.com). Mayor starts with the Pledge of  
4 Allegiance.

5  
6 Present: Mayor Belangia(SB), Mayor Pro Tempore Price (AP), Commissioner Overcash(CO), Commissioner  
7 Litzenberger(BL), Commissioner Roe(FR), and Commissioner Crosser(BC). Town Manager Diane Miller(DM), Dep  
8 Finance Officer Lisa Millington, and many members of the Public.  
9 Mayor starts with Pledge of Allegiance.

10  
11 CO: makes the MOTION that we approve the agenda. FR: Would like to add dumpster discussion, alcohol district  
12 potential, and town overtime policy. CO amends motion to include all. FR: seconds. 5-0.

13  
14 Public Comment: James Parrish: Green waste dumpster- need a different solution.  
15 Angie Propst- Thanks Board and staff making the Art gallery opening possible.  
16 Jane David-asks Board if they plan to limit the number of Air BnBs in town.

17  
18 Consent Agenda: BC wants 5/20, 5/7 regular, and June 4 regular minutes removed. Discussion after Public Hearing.  
19 FR seconds. 5-0.

20  
21 Manager's Report: While the Financial report says end of year- there are still many things to be backed in. There are  
22 also several items that used to come in one month behind that are now coming in two months behind. We are not  
23 behind, the State is in refunding us money that is owed. We also get June's bills in July and they must be paid from  
24 23-24 budget. Occupancy tax is \$5,000 higher than last year with one more month to go. Also, sales and use tax is  
25 already at projection and the state owes us two months' worth yet. Property taxes close to projection.

26  
27 Manager requests all participate in the survey for Pamlico Regional Hazard Mitigation plan survey- we get credit for  
28 that. Ms. Ann Rost is our last volunteer to join the group. Multiple Hazard planning group- we will post the link and  
29 the QR code for you to answer a very quick- not personal- survey. Our participation in this affects (by lowering) our  
30 flood and fire insurance.

31  
32 New Public Works Employee- Mr. Jerry Fessenden- we welcomed him last week. Josh is training him. We are  
33 spraying in the morning on Thursday, 4AM-6AM. This week we'll spray Friday morning to help clear for Croaker  
34 Festival. (Question about cross training) Jerry is already spraying (5 workers per one license allowed). Doing a little  
35 of everything with Josh.

36 Daniel Early passed his B-Distribution test and we have forwarded the paperwork to make him our ORC for that.  
37 Josh currently backup with C-Distribution, C Well.

38  
39 The legal agreement released today is for PFAS chemicals- we have tested negative- puts us in the suit if we test  
40 positive in the future.

41  
42 Manager encourages residents to be kind to our guests coming for Croakerfest- their dollars spent in town is what  
43 keeps property taxes low.

44  
45 Town Dock One becomes 2 hour docking ONLY from August 1 through September 30 for fishing and visiting  
46 guests. We will get the word out ahead of those dates.

47

48 Sheet will be inserted to the water bill telling residents all fees that change as of July 1. Tax rate remains, highest tiers  
49 of water use up slightly, County taxes are up \$.02/\$100.  
50  
51 New company doing our meter reading by contract- a few bumps, not bad. We've had a lot of leaks. Nobody can  
52 touch meters except us and a licensed plumber. We fix what we break. If we come to your meter and it's broken, we  
53 will be charging you to fix those parts.  
54  
55 Manager goes through remaining increased fees.  
56  
57 Cardboard dumpster and the recycling dumpster on Tuesdays at the Rec Park will go away end of July. County cut  
58 funding for those. All excess recycling needs to go to the transfer station on NC Hwy 306.  
59  
60 Bushhogging complete behind the water plant- lots of trees still to come out.  
61  
62 BC discusses project update (Water System Rehab): Maps scanned and reprinted, system transferred to GIS files.  
63 State agrees to pay as we move forward. Hydraulic modeling and measurements are next, looking at sizes and lengths  
64 of pipe. All gets put into a virtual model that should predict pressure and flow- we go from there to fix those things.  
65 Likely a booster station, lots of valves, twenty miles of pipes to assess.  
66  
67 160D Conversion: Manager explains the legal requirement for our Growth Management Ordinance to be evaluated  
68 for compliance with N.C.G.S. §106D. Introduces Mr. Carlton Gideon, the Senior Community Planner from Eastern  
69 Carolina Council of Govts, who did our conversion. Mr. Gideon further explained that parts of 160A were repealed  
70 and replaced into 160D for clarity- gone through line by line. All development regulations within the state- enabling  
71 statutes. They specify processes and their updates. Your adoption of a Comprehensive Plan in coordination with the  
72 conversion puts you ahead of many. You have a very good Planning Board- involved, engaged- very rare. We added  
73 a few definitions to the draft and explained the difference between legislative and evidentiary hearings.  
74  
75 CO makes a MOTION to open the Public Hearing. FR seconds. 5-0.  
76 SB: You got a lady who wants to speak. Oh, it's Anne, [Rost] 2115 White Farm Road. I'm relatively new to this, but  
77 this is a no brainer. State law trumps municipal law. A lot of very hard work went into taking our GMO and making  
78 it comply with state law, which has to ratify it. It's not changing anything. That's for later.  
79 DM: I just wanted to make it clear, we had talked about, several times before this meeting, we had other changes that  
80 we wanted to perhaps make to the GMO, and the planning board chose to separate that, so that today, all we're doing  
81 is the 160 D.  
82 AP: I want to say that on the planning board meeting I went to, Carlton was there, to go back and forth between him  
83 and them and manager Miller was excellent. Working everything out. It was good.  
84 FR: Yeah, I have a question. Who is our representative to the council? [Allen Price] Thank you for that commercial.  
85 CO: makes a MOTION to close the Public Hearing. FR seconds. 5-0. FR makes a MOTION to approve Ordinance  
86 2024-302 the changes presented to the GMO. CO seconds. 5-0.  
87  
88 Next up are adds to the agenda: 5/7/24, 6-4-24, -5/20/24. We are using new transcription technology, it makes the  
89 Minutes long- no AI component. BC notes inconsistency, repetitiveness, and not consolidated consistently, so  
90 Manager will take another pass at them and resubmit for August meeting. BL notes she was present and had a hard  
91 time understanding, especially numbers, that those not present would really struggle. FR: We should use format that  
92 emphasizes actions taken by the Board, move away from transcript. Thinks it is a waste of the Manager's time to  
93 spend hours on Minutes. Manager notes part of longer Minutes is to have a reference point when similar subjects  
94 keep arising- can see past discussions and decisions. We did have eight hours of Planning Board Minutes and several  
95 long Regular Board meetings, plus Closed Sessions. We keep recording for the previous year and the current fiscal.  
96 Once the written Minutes are approved, that is the official record of the meeting. FR: Prefers, as suggested, a record  
97 of actions taken and directions given. Discussion about posting recordings, holding recordings ONLY as record, etc.  
98  
99 Overtime Policy. OT should be authorized by the Manager and reported to the Board. Manager notes calls for service  
100 after schedule done, added events, added problems, things that process past scheduled end of shift. If one officer is  
101 sick or on vacation and a situation arises, it necessitates OT on the other officer. We try to balance.  
102

103 Alcohol on the streets: Currently, Ordinance says no open containers on any streets, none in Town Hall or on Town  
104 Property. Mayor has spoken to Ol Front Porch people, CroakerFest is too soon. Let Manager gather info and bring it  
105 back. Manager locates and displays section of current Ordinance.  
106

107 Schedule: Added Agenda meetings at last meeting. Once on schedule, there were some objections- looking at  
108 increase in number. Mayor notes any Board member can add items, we don't need to have a meeting about it. BC:  
109 Make sure we get it out in advance, so residents can see subjects proposed. BC makes a MOTION to suspend the  
110 Agenda meetings through December. BL seconds. 5-0.  
111

112 Green Waste Policy: Manager notes PW Staff down to 3- time from call to pickup is anywhere from one day to 3,  
113 depending on availability of drivers/vehicles. Some days they are not used days at a time, others we are delivered at  
114 5AM and full by 5PM. Hard to set a regular schedule. Sometimes it would be overfilled and others emptying an  
115 empty dumpster. Intent was to reduce burning and remove green waste from ditches- that has been accomplished.  
116 Video surveillance has produced identities of SOME offenders. If full, they can always drive up to The Transfer  
117 station on NC Hwy 306, but it does cost you to go there. Also contractor use/abuse of the facility. County pulled the  
118 service altogether- we could also. Tree Board is also very active.  
119

120 Credit Card Policy: We have a draft from UNC SOG. BC and DM went back and forth on draft. Finance Officer  
121 already adds new vendors, so that is covered. Limits are different- needs adjustment. Manager goes through path of  
122 ordering/paying for items by credit. All employees issued cards will sign. BL makes a MOTION to approve the  
123 policy with adjusted limits as discussed. BC seconds. 5-0.  
124

125 Manager's Goals: Discussion about several proposed goals among Board. Publish drainage and road repair schedule,  
126 Manage& organize town meeting for resident input on roads, Foster a professional atmosphere, Bank reconciliations  
127 in 30 days following receipt of statement, cross training of staff, Professional development, go after funding for roads  
128 and drainage. CO will write up the final list, reformatted.  
129

130 Police: No police present due to next weekend's event- nothing glaring in the report, a lot of speed enforcement to try  
131 and get our summer speeders to comply. Dog Park new tags due. A lot of assist other agencies- a lot of fires along  
132 roads throughout the county- Silospalooza was the only event. Admin is measured in hours and includes required  
133 annual training.  
134

135 Auxiliary Boards- LOTS of Minutes- they have been busy. Tree Board and Parks and Rec updates given. Pirates on  
136 the Porch this week for CroakerFest. Tourism has engaged a social media specialist who will be speaking to residents  
137 about what may be most useful. Looking at July 17-18. Fall campaign will key to intracoastal waterway. HWAC is  
138 working on maintenance for all facilities, another potential shoreline restoration and erosion control.  
139

140 Commissioner Comments: Cardboard dumpster- for us to take over, \$100/month, \$365 per changeout, no tipping.  
141 County had a much better (old) contract- starting new, you start with new prices.  
142

143 CO makes a MOTION to adjourn. FR seconds. 5-0.  
144  
145  
146  
147

148 \_\_\_\_\_  
149 Sally Belangia , Mayor

148 \_\_\_\_\_  
149 Diane H. Miller, Town  
150 Manager/Clerk

151 Approved , 2024



ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, July 2, 2024, 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC

**Actions taken:**

- 1) Agenda amended- added Dumpster discussion, Alcohol district potential, overtime policy
- 2) Public Comment taken
- 3) Removed Minutes 5/7 regular, 5/20 budget, and 6/4 regular from consent agenda.
- 4) Released and discussed closed session minutes concerning PFAS legal agreement
- 5) Conducted Public Hearing on GMO amendment and voted unanimously to amend GMO as presented to make it compliant with N.C.G.S. §160D.
- 6) Direct Manager to re-do Minutes removed from agenda.
- 7) Directed Manager to bring back OT policy for approval.
- 8) Directed Manager to bring back additional information on “social district”.
- 9) Suspended “Agenda Meetings” until December 2024.
- 10) Approved credit card policy with changes.
- 11) Directed Commissioner Overcash to bring back the final list of Manager’s goals to Aug 13 meeting.



## ORIENTAL TOWN BOARD MEETING ACTION ITEMS

Tuesday, July 2, 2024 @ 6PM  
507 Church Street, Oriental, NC  
*Mayor Sally Belangia Officiating*

### 1. **Revise Minutes:**

Regular Town Board Meeting Minutes 5-7-24  
Town Board Budget Meeting #4 Minutes 5-20-24  
Regular Town Meeting Minutes 6-4-24

2. **Approved request from Bike MS** for use of Lou Mac Park Sept 7-8, 2024. Manager to sign paperwork and communicate with BikeMS.
3. **GMO 160D revision:** Manager will file Ordinance changing GMO and replace active GMO with version approved at meeting. Carlton Gideon said he would send a clean copy for our use prior to his departure.
4. **(Added Item) Overtime Policy:** Manager will adjust overtime policy and present for approval to Board.
5. **Minutes Policy:** Manager will attempt to condense Minutes better- implementation of transcription software. Retaining the recordings per the adjusted policy last year.
6. **Scheduling:** Board removed Agenda meetings scheduled Tuesday before the Tuesday meeting from now until December and reevaluate then.
7. **Credit Card Policy:** Board approved draft credit card changes with minor changes. Manager will make changes and secure signatures of all employees with Credit Cards.
8. **Manager's Goals for 2024-2025:** The Board agreed on several items set for Manager's goals for the 24-25 FY.