

**City of New Bern
Board of Aldermen Meeting
March 10, 2020 – 6:00 P.M.
City Hall Courtroom
300 Pollock Street**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Alderman Odham. Pledge of Allegiance.**

- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw, Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris (via telephone), Alderman Robert Aster, Alderman Johnny Ray Kinsey, Alderman Barbara Best, and Alderman Jeffrey Odham. Absent: None. A quorum was present.

Also Present: Mark Stephens, City Manager; Michael Scott Davis, City Attorney; and Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

- 3. Request and Petition of Citizens.**

Ethel Sampson of 1038 Sampson Street spoke about the plaque ceremony at Greenwood and Cedar Grove Cemeteries. She stated she was happy and pleased with the event and thanked the City for its part. Alderman Bengel congratulated Mrs. Sampson on receiving the Community Fabric Award.

Victor Taylor of 2817 Walter Drive thanked the Board and various staff for their assistance with the Black History Month Parade. However, he stated each year he has experienced issues with Parks and Recreation. This year, the appropriate number of barricades was not approved on two occasions. He expressed concerns about staff allowing their personal feelings to interfere with their ability to perform their job. He asked for action to be taken so that this does not happen again. His second concern was the registration fee for Prostate Cancer Awareness to participate in MumFest. He did not think those giving out lifesaving information should be required to pay a registration fee. Lastly, he commented on the sweet potatoes that were recently donated to citizens. While the donation is a blessing, he expressed concern about the presentation of the donation, citing concerns about contamination from placing the potatoes on the ground.

Consent Agenda

- 4. Consider Approving a Proclamation for North Carolina 811 Safe Digging Month.**

Howard Corey, Education Liaison with NC 811, requested a proclamation observing April as NC 811 Safe Digging Month.

5. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Vietnam Wall and Vietnam War Veteran's Day.

Dave Nelson, on behalf of American Legion Post 539, requested a proclamation observing the display of the Vietnam Wall in New Bern on March 27-29, 2020 and proclaiming March 29th as Vietnam War Veteran's Day.

6. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Women's History Month.

Bee Mayo requested a proclamation for Women's History Month, which is observed in March.

7. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Arbor Day 2020.

Foster Hughes, Director of Parks and Recreation, requested a proclamation recognizing March 20, 2020 as Arbor Day. An annual proclamation is required for the City to receive the Tree City USA designation.

8. Approve Minutes.

Draft minutes from the February 11, 2020 and February 25, 2020 regular meetings were provided for review and approval.

Alderman Odham made a motion to approve Items 4-8 of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Alderman Aster. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

9. Presentation of Longevity Certificates.

Mr. Stephens provided an update on the coronavirus, recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control ("CDC"), and North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's action today to initiate a State of Emergency. He encouraged people to seek credible updates from the CDC and other professionals, and noted the City would be sharing information on its website. In light of recommended precautions, the Board was asked to extend a round of applause at the end of the presentation, instead of a handshake of appreciation.

Employment service is recognized at five-year increments. A roster of all employees who were eligible to receive a service certificate for the period of July-December 2019 was provided. Some of those employees were present to receive their certificates, which were presented by Mr. Stephens and Sharon Koprowski, Assistant Director of Human Resources.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to take a brief recess, seconded by Alderman Best. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 6:19 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 6:26 p.m. Mayor Outlaw stated a request to speak under Request and Petition of Citizens was missed, and he called the citizen forward to make her comments.

Katrina Nixon at 207 Holly Street spoke in favor of rebuilding Stanley White Recreation Center at the former Days Hotel site. She felt that site would be safer and more convenient for the children since it was between Trent Court and Craven Terrace. At its current location, children from Trent Court have to cross a busy street when walking to the center. She also asked if the gutted houses in the black community could be demolished and the lots given to Habitat for Humanity to improve the look of the area and eliminate the impoverished appearance.

10. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Initiate the Upset Bid Process for 208 Daniels Street.

Jimmie Mangol submitted an offer of \$9,500.00 for the purchase of 208 Daniels Street. The tax value of the half-acre lot with a singlewide mobile home is \$18,000.00, which represents more than 50% of the value. The City and County acquired the property jointly through tax foreclosure in August 2019. If the property is sold for the initial offer, the County will receive approximately \$6,529.85 of the proceeds, and the City will receive approximately \$2,970.15. These estimates take into account the cost of publishing the legal advertisement.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution to initiate the upset bid process for 208 Daniels Street, seconded by Alderman Odham. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

11. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Initiate the Upset Bid Process for 1509 Washington Street.

Robert Carter submitted an offer of \$3,000.00 for the purchase of 1509 Washington Street, which is a vacant, ¼-acre lot. The offer represents 50% of the tax value. The Board voted at its February 25, 2020 meeting to unfreeze this lot and authorize staff to accept a bid. The property was acquired by the City through tax foreclosure in October 2006.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution to initiate the upset bid process for 1509 Washington Street, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

12. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Contract with Moffatt & Nichol for Services Related to a Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The City issued a Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) for the development of a Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan. The goal of the plan is to build the capacity of the New Bern community to avoid, prepare for, withstand, recover, and build back better following disastrous events, with specific focus on underserved and historic communities. In response to the RFQ, nine submissions were received. Moffatt &

Nichol was selected to be the most qualified firm, and a contract is proposed at a cost not to exceed \$140,000.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a contract with Moffatt & Nichol for services related to a Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

13. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving an Amendment to a Letter of Engagement for Professional Services – FEMA with Disaster Recovery Services, LLC.

Following Hurricane Florence in September 2018, the City entered into two agreements with Disaster Recovery Services, LLC (“DRS”) to provide professional services. One agreement covered services related to FEMA claims and the second was relative to insurance claims. It is requested that the Board authorize a letter of engagement amending the scope of work for the FEMA services to include debris removal and repairs to approximately 66 miles of drainage ditches and waterways. Based upon the expanded scope of work, DRS estimates that the updated project costs for FEMA recovery will not exceed \$1,950,000 for the consulting fees.

Mayor Outlaw asked the City Manager to summarize the work that had been performed. Mr. Stephens said the City initially felt the damages were in the neighborhood of \$14 million to \$16 million. However, with the assistance of DRS, the City has projected recovery efforts of around \$60 million. The ditch work alone is approximately a \$30 million project and Stanley White Recreation Center is \$8 million. The Mayor described some of the contacts and efforts that he and the City Manager have been involved in, including speaking with federal elected officials and joining an alliance group with other coastal municipalities.

Corey Spaulding, Project Manager with DRS, noted the recovery is actually anticipated at \$61 million and all of DRS’ consultant fees are reimbursable by FEMA. Mr. Spaulding described additional funds that may be received, but have not yet been calculated. He also pointed out DRS assisted with the City’s insurance claims as well. Discussion ensued about other potential funds that may be available.

(Alderman Bengel momentarily stepped out of the room at 6:46 p.m., returning at 6:48 p.m.)

Mayor Outlaw recommended that the process and expenditure of the funds should be well documented for archival purposes since this is a historical occurrence. Mr. Stephens provided an update on repairing the docks and piers, noting progress on the project is a matter of securing a contractor. Many contractors are committed to other jobs at this time. Completing the canal and ditch work will likely take 12 to 18 months, as permits, easements, etc. must be obtained. Alderman Kinsey expressed the need for continued maintenance once the work is completed.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution approving an amendment to a letter of engagement for professional services – FEMA with Disaster Recovery Services, LLC, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Mayor Outlaw expressed gratitude to Alderman Aster for all of his work with DRS on the FEMA processes.

14. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Contract with Draper Aden for Professional Engineering Services for Category A Identification Work.

The City has been working with DRS to have FEMA accept an estimated \$32 million project for repairs to the City's drainage system resulting from damages sustained during Hurricane Florence. An RFQ was issued for engineering services. From the responses received, Draper Aden was deemed the most qualified firm to perform phases II and IV of the project, which covers further detailed inspection and design work related to Category A projects. The cost of the contract shall not exceed \$850,000.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a contract with Draper Aden for Professional Engineering Services for Category A Identification Work, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

15. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Contract with Draper Aden for Professional Engineering Services for Category D Design Work.

Similar to the previous item, after issuing an RFQ for engineering services, Draper Aden was deemed the most qualified firm to perform phase III of the project, which covers permanent design work related to Category D projects. This phase of the project will be invoiced based on time and material rates.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a contract with Draper Aden for Professional Engineering Services for Category D Design Work, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

16. Consider Adopting an Amendment to the Capital Project Ordinance for the Martin Marietta Park Project Fund.

The City has been awarded a grant from the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for park improvements associated with the Martin Marietta Park Phase I Project. The amount of the award is \$475,000. This ordinance acknowledges receipt of the grant and establishes the necessary budget.

Alderman Odham made a motion to adopt an amendment to the capital project ordinance for the Martin Marietta Park Project Fund, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

17. Consider Adopting an Ordinance Establishing the Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant Project Fund.

This budget ordinance establishes the Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan Project Fund and establishes the necessary budget of \$140,000. Various grants totaling \$88,000 have been received to date, the proceeds of which will be used toward development of a citywide resiliency and hazard mitigation plan. The remaining \$52,000 will be a transfer from the General Fund, if needed. The City, however, anticipates the award of a grant that will cover the remainder of these funds.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt an ordinance establishing the Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant Project Fund, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Mayor Outlaw encouraged significant citizen input during the development of the plan. Alderman Bengel suggested involvement with Craven County.

18. Appointment(s).

Alderman Bengel made a motion to reappoint James Dugan to the Appearance Commission, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 7-0. Mr. Dugan will serve another three-year term.

Mr. Stephens will seek clarification from Katie Bourdeaux, Executive Director of Eastern Carolina Council of Governments, regarding the appointment to ECC's Executive Committee.

19. Attorney's Report.

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

20. City Manager's Report.

Mr. Stephens stated the City has accepted and executed the offer of \$8.4 million from FEMA with respect to Stanley White Recreation Center.

MCAS Cherry Point has announced that it will be performing practice flights with its harrier jets at Coastal Carolina Regional Airport beginning March 14, 2020. This activity will support pilot training, which generally occurs over the weekend. As a result, there may be more jet noise in the area.

21. New Business.

Mayor Outlaw

Preservation Management is making repairs to Craven Terrace. Mayor Outlaw expressed concern about four or five air conditioning units that are raised off the ground and pose a potential risk to children.

Alderman Odham

If anyone feels they are having symptoms of the coronavirus, contact the Health Department instead of visiting the Emergency Room. Doing so will eliminate contamination of others.

Candidates from the recent election were requested to remove their campaign signs.

There is a process for handling issues aside from social media and hysteria. The media hype is not productive and also puts blame on others who are not responsible.

Alderman Best

Many phone calls and emails have been received about the sweet potatoes in Craven Terrace. Citizens have been informed that Craven Terrace is privately owned, and the City cannot control certain things on private property. Mr. Stephens was asked to explain the process for addressing issues on private property. He explained a public nonprofit coordinated with others, as it does every year, to give away the potatoes. The City had nothing to do with the donation or the acceptance of the potatoes. It was Mr. Stephens' understanding that the potatoes at Craven Terrace have been cleaned up. The potatoes located at a secondary site, which is a church, are believed to still remain there. Once the situation violates City codes or ordinances, the City can step in to mitigate the issue.

Alderman Kinsey

There is an issue with traffic and buses meeting on Racetrack Road, and staff was asked to investigate the cost to fix the problem. He also inquired about sidewalks from Elizabeth Avenue to the bridge. Alderman Odham suggested Alderman Kinsey speak with the MPO staff about Racetrack Road. As far as the sidewalks, Alderman Odham reminded everyone that the overpass would be replaced. It is possible sidewalks to the bridge and after the bridge could be reviewed for consideration.

Concerns were expressed about a culvert that is caving in on Colony Drive at Neuse Boulevard.

Alderwoman Harris

Agreement was expressed with Alderman Odham's concerns about properly handling issues and addressing them with the Governing Board. Citizens enjoyed the donation of potatoes, but Alderwoman hopes to work on approving the process next year.

Alderman Bengel

Noting citizens were not happy, an update was sought on the Second Street and Spencer Avenue traffic study. Matt Montanye, Director of Public Works, stated the traffic count began last Saturday morning and ran for a week. The counts have been pulled, and the goal is to download the data and provide a report this week.

Thanks was expressed to the Police Department for stepping up its presence in the Ghent neighborhood to monitor and cite drivers for running stop signs.

The North Carolina Main Street Conference is being held in New Bern this week with more than 750 registrants in attendance. Thanks was expressed to Lynne Harakal, Executive Director of Swiss Bear, for her work.

The DoubleTree may potentially reopen at the end of June. Although, the hotel is not taking bookings until 2021.

22. Closed Session.

Alderman Odham made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(5) to discuss the potential acquisition of real estate and NCGS §143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss potential economic development incentives for a business to locate to our area, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 7:45 p.m.

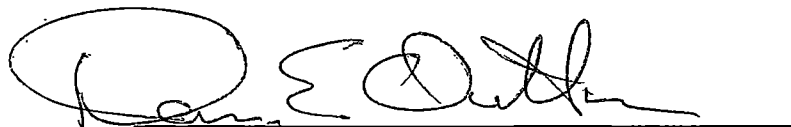
23. Adjourn.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Aster. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 9:41 p.m.

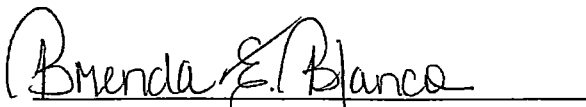
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

NOTE: For additional details and information on the Board of Aldermen meetings, please visit the City of New Bern's website at www.newbernnc.gov. Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: March 24, 2020



Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor



Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk